WHITE PATCH

Angelo Patri

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WHITE PATCH

BERTELLI'S ITALIAN STORY

OF

CIONDOLINO

RETOLD

FOR AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS

BY

ANGELO PATRI

PRINCIPAL IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK CITY

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W. P. 21

PREFACE

THIS book has been rendered into English and adapted for our children, because both its ethical appeal and its subject matter are of universal worth. The original is a wonderful story, a beautiful picture of nature study and child life. Its strength lies not only in the ease with which it reveals the life of the social insects, but also in the wholesome moral lessons that are brought home to the children.

The highest function of nature study in the elementary school is the building up of an appreciative point of view. This story gives a vivid presentation of scientific knowledge, promotes intelligent observation, and, above all, stimulates a fine, healthy attitude toward the world of nature.

The extent to which the story can be used as a basis for nature study lessons in the classroom is a matter best left to the discretion of the teacher. It must be remembered, however, that sympathy results primarily from two factors, — *direct* experiences and *continued* experience.

This story forms the nucleus around which direct experiences may be grouped; furthermore, it holds the attention upon the same topic for a long period of time, and thus affords the opportunity for continued experience, without which sympathy and appreciation cannot last.

For the assistance given me in putting together the story of White Patch, my thanks are due to William E. Grady, Principal P. S. 64, Manhattan; I. Edwin Goldwasser, Principal P. S. 20, Manhattan; and Garibaldi La Polla, De Witt Clinton High School.

ANGELO PATRI.

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WHITE PATCH

CHAPTER I

NOT WILLING TO STUDY

I SHALL begin my story by telling you what a home in the country is like on a beautiful day in July. On such a day all the country stretches out to rest. Not even the jump-

ing, noisy crickets dare make a sound. But, no! . . . Having been a boy myself, I know that little people will skip this part of the story; and so I shall leave you to think of the rest for yourselves. I am sure that it will not be hard for any of you to picture a warm, sunny day in July, a white country house with green shutters, and a large balcony covered over with grapevines. The vines are loaded down with leaves, but there are only a few clusters of grapes scattered here and there, and these are far away from the windows, because it is well known that the grapevine never bears its clusters near the windows where children can get at them. Have you never noticed that the bluest grapes always hang just beyond your reach?

But hist! Here they are!

The door of the house opens. Out of it, one by one, come two small boys and a little girl. They come down the steps, their eyes cast to the ground.

You may wonder how it is that three children in the country can be so down-hearted; but really, it is not strange. Each of the children has a book. A voice from within the house follows them, saying:

"Study, I beg of you. When you return, you must know your lessons!"

The little ones keep on walking. They are in line. No one makes a sound. Their heads are bowed. Yes, they are very sad, — sad, indeed!

They come to a little clear space sheltered from the sun by a thick clump of trees. There they sit down upon a small stone bench. It is a cool spot, quiet and pleasant, just the place where one might study — if he had a mind to.

Slowly each one opens his book. Five minutes pass. Then the smaller boy, dropping his book on his knees, and puffing out his cheeks, blows a long, whistling sound that says, as plain as can be, that he has had enough.

He looks at each one of his companions.

"Pshaw! I can't stand it any longer!" he cries.

But his companions still keep their eyes fixed upon their books. He nudges the little girl.

"Tell me, aren't you tired?" he asks.

"Do keep quiet, Gigino. You know very well that I have to study my arithmetic."

"I know it, but how can you do any figuring in this heat?"

At this point the elder boy speaks.

"It isn't warm here at all. Mother says that it is rather cool and that one can study very well."

"Of course, mother is right," said Gigino, "but when one doesn't care to study, what's the good of a cool spot?"

This way of putting it seemed to please everybody. There was an end to the talk. The books were slapped down upon the bench.

"Death to the history of the Middle Ages!" said Maurice.

"Death to arithmetic!" cried Georgina.

"Death to my Latin grammar!" added Gigino.

Maurice rose to his feet, and, as he stretched his weary body, said with a yawn, "All this comes from failing in your examinations."

"Better say, failing in *our* examinations," came from Georgina.

Gigino burst into laughter, and then went straight to the heart of the matter.

"That some of us passed our examinations amounts to nothing, after all. The evil lies in this, that at present we have to work, and it is hot, and we don't want to study."

Maurice, who was a great talker himself, and who hoped some day to become a lawyer, thought that the moment had come to look at the question from another point of view.

"As for myself, you must understand that I am against examinations," he began.

But Gigino interrupted him:

"You mean that examinations are against you."

"Keep quiet and let me speak," said Maurice, looking at him from the corner of his eyes. "If not, remember, I'll call you 'Patches.'"

At this Gigino jumped up and thrust his hand behind him.

You must know that Gigino, like all small boys, was very hard on his clothes. What with nails, and fences, and trees, he managed to tear his trousers oftener than any other boy I have ever known. And so it often happened that his clothes would have to be patched. Even then the patches would tear, and the other boys would tease him about it. Then Gigino would go into a rage and stamp about, and, of course, everybody would enjoy the fun and keep right on calling him "Patches! Patches!"

When Maurice threatened to call him "Patches," Gigino kept still and listened.

"As I was saying," continued Maurice, "I am against examinations because they are not fair. Do you want proof? Study a whole book, word for word, with the exception of one lonely, little page. You may be certain that at the examination you will be asked a question from that one page."

"That's a fact," said Georgina.

"And to think," added Gigino, "that by a good guess, one could study that one page alone and in that way pass the examination."

"Study! Study!" went on Maurice, stamping his foot. "Study! yes, that is very well; but one should be free to study whenever he chooses. Why, I ask, must men be forced to such slavery?"

"And how about the women?" added Georgina.

"Animals are a thousand times happier than we.

They don't have to do anything from morning till night. There is no *must* in their language. Look about you. There are dogs, cats, birds, flies, all sorts of living things. They get along very well without studying the history of the Middle Ages. . . ."

"Or arithmetic. . . ."

"Or grammar. . . ."

What was the good of being children? Better be anything else, they thought, for children were but the slaves of their parents and their teachers.

"Oh!" Georgina exclaimed, "what's the use of arithmetic for a girl, anyway? I want to be a beautiful butterfly and fly about all day long without thought of anything."

"I," said Maurice, reseating himself, "I should prefer to become a dancing grasshopper."

"Rather than study grammar," said Gigino, "I would change myself into an ant."

"An ant!" exclaimed Maurice and Georgina.

"Yes," added Gigino firmly. "One of those ants that go about always on parade, and do nothing but march from morning till night."

At this point a voice from behind them cried out: "Indeed?"

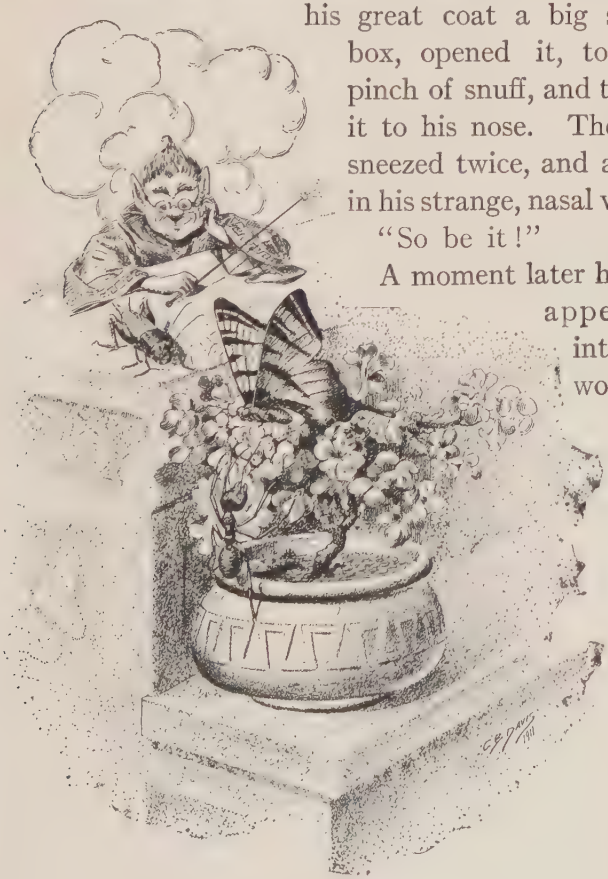
The three children turned around with wide, staring eyes. They saw a man, without being able to tell where he had come from. He was not at all like other men. He carried a big pair of spectacles

on his little red nose and his neck was wrapped in a long black scarf. He was short and broad, and wore a wide, greenish coat that reached to his feet.

He looked at the children, smiled, drew out from his great coat a big snuff-box, opened it, took a pinch of snuff, and thrust it to his nose. Then he sneezed twice, and added in his strange, nasal voice:

"So be it!"

A moment later he disappeared into the woods.



CHAPTER II

GIGINO BECOMES AN EGG

GIGINO sat rooted to his seat. He tried to run away, but he could not. He was glued to the bench. He wanted to turn toward his companions, but he could not even move his head. He tried to turn his eyes in their direction, but this was painful. His sight had become dim and weak. He could barely make out the forms of his brother and sister. They seemed to him to have become very small. In fact, they looked like tiny eggs.

Then Gigino felt that he himself had become a great deal smaller and that he was shrinking more and more, and becoming rounder and rounder.

He wanted to throw out his hands, to kick, to scream, to cry, to bite, to throw off that strange power which was making him smaller and smaller, and which, who knows, might make him disappear altogether! Alas! he could not stir. He was being bound on every side. A shell was forming about

him. By this time he was reduced to a tiny spot, and his brain was so clouded that he did not know what was happening.

As in a dream he thought he saw two shadows next to him, and an instant later he felt himself lifted up. He made a last effort to free himself, to shout, "Let me be, let me be!" But it was a great strain, and it cost him the little bit of energy he still had. The next moment silence closed about him. The world was blotted out.

CHAPTER III

GIGINO BECOMES AN ANT

GIGINO could not tell how long he was in that state. But it must have been some time.

When he regained his senses, he felt rather strange.

It seemed as if some one had mistaken him for a piece of cardboard, and wound about him a whole ball of thread, closing poor Gigino up in a tight little bundle from which he could not get away.

Then he became aware of some one who was helping him get out of the tangle by unwinding the threads. After some time he was able to free his head and arms.

"Courage!" a voice said to him. "Pull up!"

With a great effort, he freed himself. Then he felt as if some one were kissing him.

"Well, well!" he exclaimed in surprise. "What's this person about?"

"I am cleaning you up a bit."

"What! with your tongue? We aren't cats. Pray, may I know what I am? And what you are? And where we both are?"

"Patience, patience," the voice answered. "There are so many questions which you want answered, and you have only just left your cocoon. Your mind is not yet clear enough to understand things and to put questions properly. Wait a little. Have patience. When the time comes, everything will be made plain."

This was all said in such a calm, kindly voice, that Gigino held back a great flood of questions that came to him. He was quiet in spite of himself.

During the silence, his mind seemed to be clearing. He began to arrange his thoughts. The wonderful change had not taken away his memory, for he could remember the past very distinctly.

First of all — and of this there could be no doubt — he was either blind, or he was in a place of total darkness. Yet, although he saw nothing, he began to feel where he was. Somehow he got the idea that he was in an underground room. He understood that about him there was a whole workshop of busy

little people. He did not have to see, to know these things. This was all very strange to him. He must have, he thought, a new organ of sense, for everything was as plain as if he saw it with his very eyes. Then, like a flash, he knew that he was an ant, and that the one with him was an ant, and that both of them were in an ant home.

So much for the present. As for the past, he could not understand by what strange manner he had come to be what he was. He remembered the little old man in the spectacles and the green coat, who had sprung up right at the moment when Gigino was saying:

"Rather than study Latin grammar, I should like to be an ant."

"And Maurice and Georgina? What of them?" murmured Gigino. "Perhaps even now they are nothing but a grasshopper and a butterfly. And mother? Poor mother! She is all alone!"

To tell the truth, Gigino was not very happy. His wish had come true, but the truth was not easy to bear.

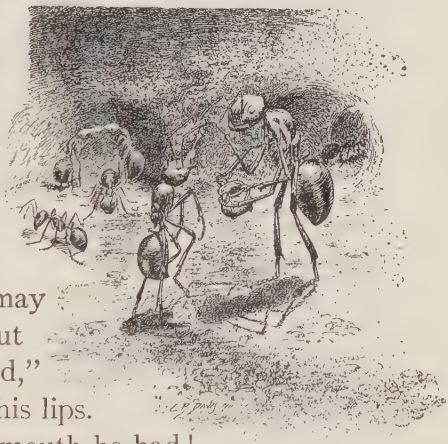
In a few moments, however, Gigino forgot his sorrow, and his busy little brain went right on working.

"I am now an ant," thought he, "and it serves me right. But I feel that I am still Gigino, otherwise I could not remember all these things. I am, therefore,

a boy ant, and, of course, superior to all other ants. I ought to be able to do whatever I please among them. Some day, who knows —"

"You must be hungry," interrupted his friend.

"Oh, a little," answered Gigino, who, indeed, began to feel hungry.



"Take this, then," said the ant, putting a drop of something very sweet into his mouth.

"What is it?"

"Milk sirup."

"Whatever that may be, I don't know. But it is certainly very good," added Gigino, licking his lips.

But what a curious mouth he had!

There were two large, strong jaws, made like the jaws of a pincers, with edges like a saw's.

"Pardon me if I am curious," said he to his companion, "but if we ants eat nothing but this sirup, what do we chew with these strong jaws?"

"Nothing; they are not for chewing."

"No? And what are they for, then?"

"For the most part the jaws are used to work with. Sometimes, however, they are needed to protect us against our enemies."

"To work with?"

"Exactly! In time you, too, will learn these things."

Gigino could do nothing but twist his mouth just as he would have done had he been a boy again and some one had said, "Study!"

The ant began once more to lick him.

"Stop, stop!" cried Gigino, laughing. "Excuse me, but you're tickling me all over."

The good ant herself laughed at this and added:

"It's natural. I have touched you in the most sensitive part of your body. I have touched your antennæ."

"Antennæ! What curious things are those?"

"Those things you have in the middle of your head are called antennæ. They are the feelers. Look!"

She touched two organs of his body to which he had up to this time paid no attention, and Gigino broke out laughing.

"These things are called horns, in my language," he said.

"Call them what you will. But they are not in the least like horns. The tickling you feel proves that they are organs of touch. Woe to us, had we no antennæ! They help us to find our way, to signal our companions, and to discover when there is trouble in our path."

"Wonderful!"

"And there is still something else. In the pores at the end of the antennæ is placed our sense of smell."

"How strange!" murmured Gigino to himself. "I should never have imagined I would have a nose at the end of my horns!"

"And besides that, we have in the antennæ even the sense of hearing."

At the idea of having such long ears, Gigino was a little downcast. The thought of looking like a donkey was not pleasant. It brought back to his mind the days of the Latin grammar and all the rest of the sad story.

"Without these feelers," went on the ant, "we could not live in this dark place."

Gigino now began to understand how it was that, even though he could not see, he was able, with the aid of his antennæ, to tell exactly where he was.

"I am sorry for one thing," he said, rather sadly.

"And what is that?"

"That I have no eyes."

The ant laughed very kindly at this, but said nothing.

And then, for the first time, Gigino thought of the fact that he had not yet thanked the ant for the kindness she had shown him.

"Pardon me, madam," he said, "but what is your name?"

"Fusca."

"Excuse me, Fusca, for not having thanked you before this. You told me so many strange things that my mind was a little confused."

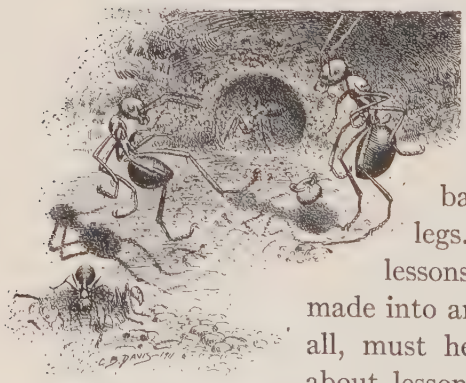
"Say no more about it. I have done no more than my duty."

"Your duty?"

"Certainly. I have done what you yourself must do to the ants that are born after you."

"How is this? Be so kind as to explain. I do not understand. . . . "

"The thing *is* a little difficult, but everything will be clear to you when you have had your lessons."



At the word "lessons" Gigino jumped back with all his six legs. What! To escape lessons, he had had himself made into an ant, and now, after all, must he listen to this talk about lessons? He was trapped. Surely this was hardly fair!

"Pardon me," said he, in a trembling voice, "but I didn't exactly hear. What did you say?"

"I said that to-morrow, when you go for your lessons, you will learn many things that every educated ant should know about. Our problems, our ideas, will be explained to you."

Gigino felt chills all over his body. Lessons! Explanations! Problems! Ideas! Even ideas! Horrible!

"Pardon me if I am rude," said Gigino, "but perhaps there may be among you even a professor of Latin grammar!"

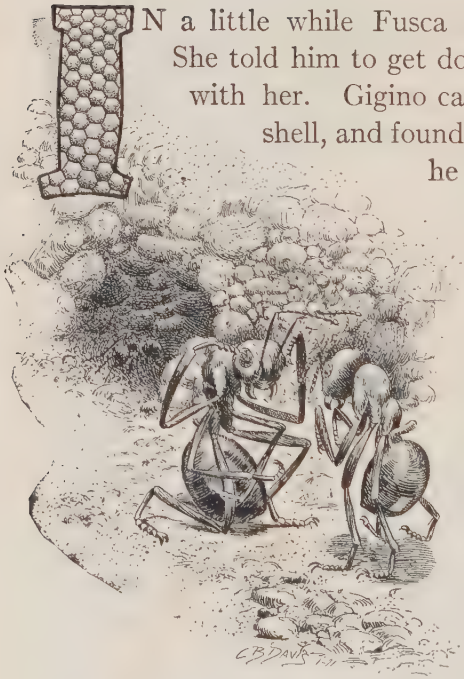
The ant did not understand, and she drew away to speak to some of her companions who were talking together in a group a little to one side.

Poor, lone Gigino! He felt a lump rise in his throat and he was on the point of bursting into tears. But he thought that it would be useless, as he had no eyes with which to cry. Instead, he climbed upon the empty cocoon and began to drum upon it with his two front legs.

CHAPTER IV

AN ANT MOTHER

IN a little while Fusca came back to him. She told him to get down and come along with her. Gigino came down from the shell, and found to his surprise that he could stand upright on his two hind legs. He still had a few human qualities; he could stand up like a boy. That was something, at least!



He followed the ant. She led him through many halls into a small room lighted by a tiny ray of light.

He was not blind, no! He had eyes, he could see, — and how he could see! But what struck Gigino most was not what he saw, but the way in which he saw.

This kind of sight was new to him. It was a very wide one. He had no need to move his eyes. He saw, at one glance, everything in front of him, everything to the right, the left, up and down, everywhere.

And there he was in a sort of cave held up by pillars. The walls were smooth and regular. To the right and left he saw many ants busily at work. In front of him an ant was smiling kindly upon him. Gigino saw all this at one and the same time.

"What is the matter with you?" Fusca asked, still smiling.

"The matter? I have eyes," said Gigino, "and I am very happy. But I should like to know how, without ever rolling them and without turning my head, I am able to see everything around me."

"You must know first," answered the ant, "that our eyes do not move at all."

Gigino examined Fusca's eyes and proved to himself that this was true.

"Therefore," continued the ant, "we must have our eyes made in such a way as to allow them to see a great deal at one glance. People tell you that an ant has compound eyes."

"And what are those?"

"That is to say, the two eyes we have at the sides of our heads are made up of many small, six-sided faces, just like a bit

of sealed honeycomb. All these faces are small eyes."

Gigino approached the speaker and examined her eyes more closely. They were indeed made up of many faces.

"Goodness! How many there are!" he cried.

"Yes, we have a great number," said the ant. "Our eyes seldom have less than a hundred faces. And these are few enough in comparison with the eyes of many other insects. Why! The eye of a fly has four thousand faces."

"Four thousand?"

"Yes, and some insects have more than twelve thousand eyes. Indeed, there is one that has more than twenty-five thousand. What do you say to that?"

"I say," said Gigino, "if it should happen that that insect should be shortsighted, there would not be enough spectacles in the world to make her see."

But Fusca knew nothing about spectacles, and this talk made her look sharply at her young charge.

"And I, how many eyes have I?" asked Gigino, as he caught his nurse's eye.

"One moment, I will count them. Here; your two eyes are made up of sixty faces each."

"I have therefore one hundred and twenty eyes?"

"Certainly you have. But that is without counting the simple ones."

"What! I have still more? Are not a hundred and twenty enough?"

"No, indeed. With our two compound eyes we see a great many things that are about us, but we could not see objects near us. For this purpose we have simple eyes, which are, indeed, the eyes with which you are looking at me."

Gigino looked sharply at the ant and saw that at the top of her head she had three smooth, round eyes, that shone like pearls.

"Then I must have one hundred and twenty-three eyes," said Gigino.

"Correct!"

"Excuse me, but I need a few minutes' time to think the matter over. What can you expect? To find that I have all these eyes is a thing that takes my breath away.

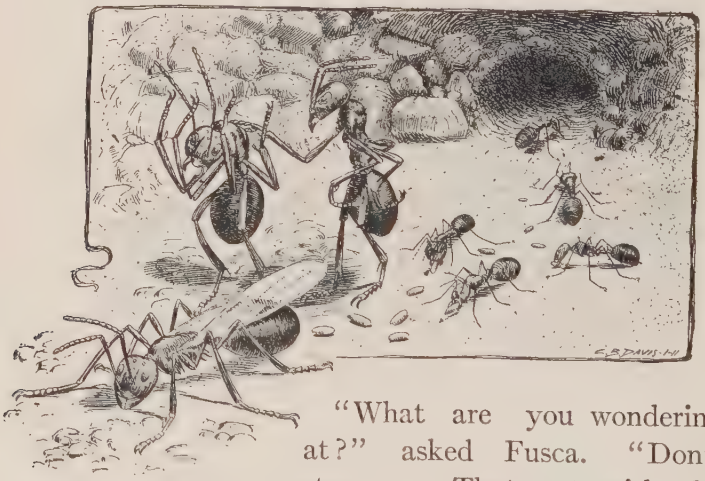
"One hundred and twenty-three eyes!" he went on, talking to himself. "Goodness! If I became a boy again and had to study with all of them! I shiver to think of it."

Gigino would have gone on dreaming, but just then a loud cry was heard through the room:

"Look! Look! Make room! — make room!"

A winged ant had entered the hall. Five or six ants without wings were following her. Gigino saw

that, as she walked along, the winged ant dropped a lot of little eggs which the other ants gathered.



"What are you wondering at?" asked Fusca. "Don't stare so. That ant with the wings is a mother ant, who has come here to her native ant-home to lay her eggs."

"And what are all those others doing?"

"They are collecting the eggs."

"To think," exclaimed Gigino, "that I was once an egg!"

"Certainly," replied Fusca. "Your egg was found outside of our home and was carried in here by two ants."

"They were the shadows," thought Gigino.

"That you may have some idea of the pains taken with you, come with me," continued Fusca.

And the good ant led him to a side of the room where hundreds of eggs were piled together, looking like so many grains of wheat, white and shiny.

"Like other insects," said Fusca, "we also pass through four stages."

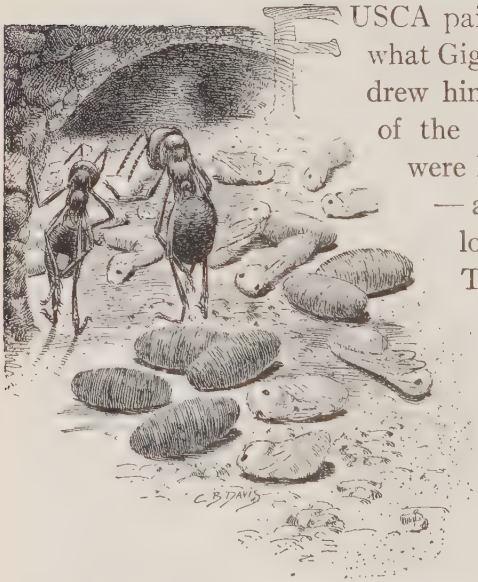
"What do you mean?"

"Look: our first stage is the egg. This egg, after a few days, grows, curves in at the point, becomes more transparent, and changes into a larva."

"I thought as much. There's Latin grammar even down here," muttered Gigino, who remembered that larva is a Latin word meaning "mask."

CHAPTER V

GIGINO LEARNS WHAT HE IS NOT



FUSCA paid no attention to what Gigino was saying, but drew him to another part of the hall. Here there were long rows of bags, — at least so they looked to Gigino. They were soft and of a curious shape. Each one started, as it were, from nothing, but swelled gradually as it neared the ground, like a tear that leaves the eye and grows larger and larger at the lower end just before it rolls down the cheek.

The bags were arranged in rows, according to their size. Gigino looked carefully at them, and again he thought of school and shivered. There they were, all in a row. And a funny lot they made.

Just a lot of heads and bodies stuffed with nonsense.

Gigino burst into a loud laugh.

"Hail to you, dunces!" he cried. "Can you tell me how many horns I have?"

He would have gone on in this way, but he noticed that many of the ants standing by were looking at him with displeasure.

"Hush!" said his companion. "Remember that you were once in the same state."

"What! I was as ugly as that?"

"Certainly, and if you are what you are now, you owe it to our care."

And for the first time, Gigino noticed that the ants were busy in paying all sorts of attention to the larvæ. Those were the curious bags.

"How long does one remain in that condition?" asked Gigino.

"A month or more."

"A month! How long was I in that stage?"

"Not very long. You came out of it soon. After twenty days or so you left your larva state and became a pupa."

"A pupa?"

"Exactly. When the larvæ arrive at their highest stage of growth, they enter upon their third stage. In other words, they are changed into pupæ. Come! I will show you."

So saying, the ant led him behind a pillar, where there were lined up a number of ants so odd that Gigino had to try hard not to laugh.

"And these things you call pupæ!" said Gigino.

We must not blame Gigino if he did laugh a little. Indeed, these were strange little beings. They had soft, gray bodies, and their legs and antennæ were folded up and limp, as if they had been soaked in oil.

"Do you mean to tell me," said Gigino, "that I was once like that?"

"You were. And when you were like these, you stopped eating, though all pupæ do not do that. You spun a cocoon around yourself while a larva, and then changed to a pupa. Soon you began to scratch from the inside, and I helped you to get out. You were lighter in color and softer when you first came out, but soon you grew dark and harder, as you and we are now."

Gigino, who had been staring at the speaker all this time with wide open eyes, exclaimed:

"What's this you're saying? I always had the idea that ants were born so, once and for all."

"No, you and the rest of the insect world have to pass through these stages."

"I've been an egg, then a larva, when I made myself a shell, then a pupa. . . ."

"Yes, yes, certainly; a shell like those that you called ants' eggs."

"You may be right. But what worries me most is that I haven't the slightest recollection of these things."

"Well, of course not. During that time your mind hadn't yet formed, just as your body had not."

Gigino shook his head. He was dazed. It was all too much for him.

The winged ant was now seen crouched up in a corner. She squirmed and turned and twisted and

tossed her wings about with her legs, all the while crying out, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" In a few minutes Gigino saw that she had broken all four wings from her body, and thrown them aside.

"What's this?" Gigino asked, a thousand questions staring out of his eyes.

"I'll explain it in a moment," answered Fusca. "That ant is an egg bearer. She has settled near our ant hill, and, wise woman that she is, she has shaken off her wings in order to avoid the temptation of flying away."

"Not so fast! Not so fast!" cried Gigino, who was beginning to feel altogether confused in the matter. "I don't understand you. You say these ants fly through the air?"

"Yes, I do."

"But we have no wings, and how do we get up into the air?"

"Why, you have nothing to do with it. Only the males and the females have wings."

Gigino was afraid he would go mad.

"Pardon me a moment. But what are we then, who have no wings?"

"That's simple enough. We are the neuters, neither male nor female."

"Wh-a-t?"

"We are merely ants."

If he could, Gigino would have turned as white as a sheet at this news. He had thought all the while that he was a boy. Had he been made a female ant, he would have borne it with patience. But to be nothing, to be neither a male nor a female, was a thing that he could not endure.

"I don't want to be merely an ant. Do you un-

derstand? The bargain has been broken. I was a boy once, and I intended to remain a boy all my life. That man with the green overcoat had no right to make what he pleased of me. If he had been a just man, he would have told me of this in the first place. In short, madam, I want to be a male and have my wings. . . . Can't you think of a way to glue to my body the wings that the lady has just taken off?"

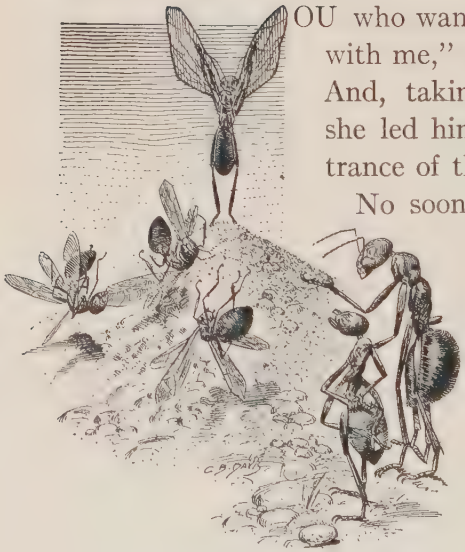
Fusca smiled kindly. She did not understand everything that Gigino was saying, but she knew that he was worried and she tried to comfort him.

"Your anger is natural. We always envy those who seem to be better off than we are. But believe me, if we could only get to know the people we envy, we would thank Nature that she made us as we are!"

The ant might say what she wished, but the blow was too much for Gigino. He felt a lump rise in his throat just as he had when he heard he was to get his lessons. Putting his two front legs to his head, he was on the point of breaking into tears. But to weep with one hundred and twenty-three eyes! That was a serious matter! For, he thought to himself, "Were I ever to start crying, surely there would be another flood!"

CHAPTER VI

THE BIG SNAKE



"YOU who want to be a male, come with me," said the good Fusca. And, taking him by the arm, she led him up to the main entrance of the ant hill.

No sooner out, than Gigino, who was meeting with surprise after surprise, saw three winged ants tossing about on the ground, uttering sounds that had no meaning, and every now and then turning head over heels.

"What are you doing there, you stupid things?" cried Gigino. "Have you no more sense than that?"

"Nevertheless, these are our males," answered the ant.

"No!"

"Yes, and, as you see, they haven't much sense. Their time is up. They have had their flight. They will die soon."

In fact, at that very moment, two of them became stiff and turned over dead. The other still continued to tumble about, repeating:

"*Si, si, . . . Cu- . . . cu. . . .*"

"Would you want to change places with them?" asked the ant.

"With them? No, thank you!"

"They live only a few days, while we may live a year, two years, — and even as long as nine years!"

"To tell you the truth," said Gigino, "I should prefer to be a female."

"It wouldn't do you much good. Even the females who fly about meet many dangers. If they manage not to be eaten up by the birds, they seldom succeed in finding their homes."

"They find others, I suspect."

"No, because no ant family will receive a stranger."

"But then no one would have any eggs," said Gigino, "and without eggs there can be no ants. The ant hill would be empty."

"Your reasoning is good. But we have some brains and try to take care that the females do not fly away."

"From what do the males and females come?"

"Why, they come from eggs, like all other ants."

"And I?"

"We found your egg on a stone bench, and at once saw that it was an egg belonging to our family."

"Now listen carefully," went on Fusca. "To be a male means to fly about a little and then to fall to the earth and die. To be a female is to have one of two fates, — to use one's wings and fly and fly, and then meet with a bad end; or not to use one's wings, and in that way be forced in the end to give them up. So, then, don't put too much faith in wings. For we wingless ants work honestly and are justly called, therefore, the 'working ants.'"

Gigino, although he did not like work, saw that Fusca was right, and said, "Yes, I must confess I was wrong to complain."

In the meanwhile groups of young ants had been led to the open in order to take the air. Gigino went up to one of the little ants and was about to begin a conversation, when a voice was heard from the distance:

"Hurry, hurry! Help! Help!"

It was an ant of stout body, who came running toward them, shouting:

"A large catch has to be dragged into the house, but there are barely a dozen of us, and we can do nothing."

Gigino's nurse turned quickly to those about her.

"Come, let's take the young ones along," she said. "Showing them how to work is better than telling them about it."

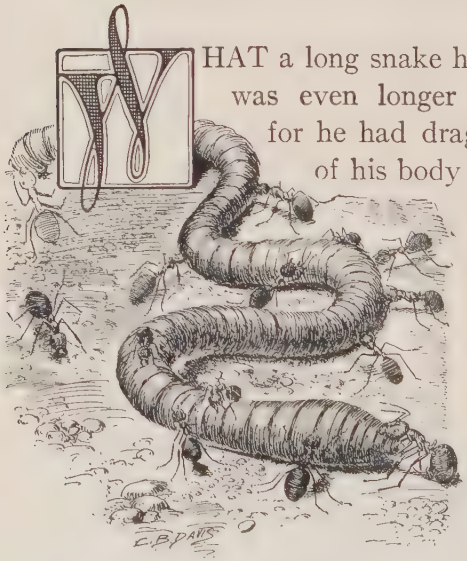
It was a fine day and Gigino did not object to a walk. They all followed over a very uneven and steep road, while the ant who had brought the message, went on, saying:

"I may be mistaken, but I am certain that a thousand of us cannot carry it over this road. . . . Here we are! It's behind that little hill."

Having climbed the hill, Gigino threw up his front legs in wonder. A big snake was being held down by about twenty ants, who did not seem in the least worried over the size of the monster.

CHAPTER VII

IN AN ANT COUNTRY THE IDEAS OF A BOY ARE WORTH LESS THAN THE IDEAS OF AN ANT



WHAT a long snake he was! And he was even longer than he looked, for he had dragged only a part of his body out of his hole in the ground. The other part was hidden from view. The ants held on to the snake and tried to pull him out. They did not succeed, however; and although the snake made a brave struggle to get back into his hole, he was unable to budge.

"This is madness," Gigino said, turning to his nurse. "Don't you see how large he is? Should he open his mouth, he could swallow a hundred of us."

"First of all," answered the ant, "you must know

that we are afraid of nothing. Next you must remember never to trust to appearances. That is nothing but a worm."

In the meantime all the ants, both old and young, had surrounded the monster, and Gigino, not wishing to be behindhand, set himself to work and put his legs around the worm.

"What's this stuff?" he asked, noticing that the worm was bathed in a liquid like lemon juice.

"It's our poison," answered Fusca; "the poison we use against our enemies."

It was, in fact, ant-acid, so called because it is made by ants.

Seeing that the worm did not budge, Gigino had an idea.

"Why not cut him up with our jaws?" he cried.

"That would be foolish. Worms do not die if you cut them up. My young friend, this worm would give any part of himself to save the rest."

The workers kept on pulling, but their efforts were of no use. What was the matter? Gigino saw that on the under side of the worm's body were a great many small bristles with which he clung to the earth around the hole.

"Pull as much as you can!" he mumbled. "But the worm will not be moved — not one step more!"

Everybody was discouraged. At this point an ant, jumping on the worm's body, cried to the others

to keep on holding fast, so that the worm might not get back into the hole.

"An idea!" shouted some one.

"Let's hear it!" cried the others.

"The worm won't let go of the earth. Very well. We will take away the earth from around him."

Gigino felt a little put out. Everybody else had caught the idea, and he, a boy, had not seen it at all. While some of the ants held on to the worm, the rest collected about the hole. Gigino followed his nurse, who told him to dig under the worm with his jaws.

They soon broke down the edge of the hole. Then they dug and dug until the worm lay stretched out in an open furrow. His stronghold had been taken away. There he was — a helpless mass.

Gigino figured that the worm was no less than four and a half inches long. The problem now was to drag the long and heavy body to the house. It was hard work. The ants, by pulling, some at his

side, others at his head, managed to drag him a part of the way. But the work was slow and hard. At one place the ground was covered with grass, and the ants could not drag the worm any farther, because the grass did not allow them a firm footing. They stopped. Gigino again suggested cutting the worm to pieces, but Fusca said:

"No, we can take him home as he is. Some of you guard the worm, the rest come with me."

Followed by most of the ants, Fusca turned homeward, marching with measured step, — a fact that greatly surprised Gigino.

CHAPTER VIII

MORE ABOUT THE WORM

"THE distance from here to the worm," said Fusca, at the entrance to the ant hill, "is about one hundred and twenty times the length of my body."

Gigino now knew why she had marched so carefully.

"If we keep in mind the depth at which we are," she continued, "we shall have no trouble in finding the exact spot. To work, then!"

Down into the house they went. Some were ordered to carry out the dirt, and others to dig. Gigino began to understand. But he was certain the thing could not be done, and told them so. He knew how hard it was for men to dig tunnels. "What can ants hope to do, then?" thought he.

After hours of work, Gigino could see no results.

"May I make a remark?" he said mockingly.

"Well?" asked Fusca.

"It seems to me that, instead of leading to the surface, this tunnel is leading farther and farther down. I daresay in a thousand years we'll reach China."

But the ants paid no attention to him. They kept right on digging, with all their might and main. Somehow, they felt that there was only a little more to do. And they kept right on — Gigino with the rest. And, sure enough, in a few moments the leader broke through into the light and they all cried, "Hurrah! Hurrah!"

The worm was there, scarcely a step from the hole Gigino was overcome with surprise. His jaws hung wide apart.

"You think this is very hard," said Fusca, "because you haven't yet become sure of yourself. In three or four days you will be fully grown and then you will be able to do such things as well as any of us."

The ants attacked their work anew. In a short time they had the worm home. Some of the ants covered up the opening to the tunnel with little twigs, straw, piles of leaves, and grains of earth. They did this to guard against any sudden attack from their neighbors.

When Gigino saw the worm stretched out at full length in the house, he thought of the fable he had heard about the Grasshopper and the Ant.

"This is the way to provide for the winter," he said with pride.

"For the winter?" asked his nurse.

"Certainly," said Gigino, drawing himself up. "Don't you think I know that the ants work in the summer to provide themselves with food because they have to stay indoors during the winter?"

The ant laughed at this.

"What are you saying? Why, we don't eat at all in the winter."

"You don't eat?"

"Of course not. We sleep."

"You sleep?"

"Surely."

"All winter?"

"Yes, all winter."

"Without waking up?"

"Without waking up."

Gigino couldn't help thinking what stupid things men say when they talk about animals that they know nothing of.

"And don't we ever go to sleep in summer?" he asked.

"O dear, not at all. We work all the time."

"Too much work," thought Gigino. "But I like the idea of saving one's sleep for winter. At least for a long time one does not have to dress, day in and day out, and that is something gained."

CHAPTER IX

GIGINO BEGINS TO GIVE HIMSELF AIRS

NOW you have some idea of what we ants can do. In a little while you will learn more. Go now and clean yourself. Then we will go up to the entrance together." It was Fusca talking to Gigino.

"Clean myself?" asked Gigino.

"Certainly. We've become covered with dust during our work, and surely you don't like to remain that way?"

"I believe you're right," said Gigino. "But how am I going to clean up without soap and water and towels?"

Of course Fusca didn't understand, and, as she had no time to waste, she simply said:

"Hasten! Get your legs to work and clean up."

Gigino examined his wonderful legs and found that at the end of each front leg there was a sort of comb. With these combs he was able to clean himself.

"Who ever would have thought that I would have combs on my legs?" said Gigino to himself.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" he began crying.

"What's the matter?" asked Fusca.

"Oh, save me! Blood is coming out of my hair!"

Fusca smiled. "Be quiet," she said; "it's nothing. You burst a gland while moving."

"Burst a gland?"

"Yes. Those hairs are connected with little glands."

"For what purpose?"

"A great purpose. The fluid is used in walking up smooth and straight walls. You pour out a drop of this fluid from each hair on to the wall. The fluid sticks and holds your body up as you climb along."

"Just think how many things we have in our legs!" exclaimed Gigino. "Pickaxes, glands,

combs! All that I need now is a toothbrush, a handkerchief, and some benzine to clean off spots!"

"Come, let's go upstairs," interrupted Fusca.

While on their way, Gigino felt a great bustling around him, and he often touched ants at work. This ant hill was a very busy place. Everybody was doing something all the time.

"What's all this going to and fro?" he asked.

"They are carrying out larvæ and pupæ. We ants feel the change of heat and cold. During the day we put the larvæ and pupæ in different rooms according to the hour. When the weather is warm, we put them in an underground chamber, and when it gets too cool there, we put them in a room nearer the surface of the earth."

Gigino, after all, had been a good-hearted boy. Kindness had always touched him. The habit was still with him and he could not help saying:

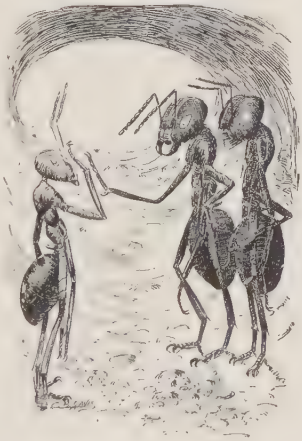
"What good little animals these ants are! I like them a great deal, and my words cannot express the thanks I owe them. They have cared for me with such tenderness. Fusca, my dear good nurse, I owe you —!"

"Nothing," put in Fusca. "You will do for others what has been done for you. I did for you only what some one had done for me. And so our life goes on. Each one of us does his duty."

By this time they had come to the entrance of the

ant hill. They found it guarded. Several ants were marching up and down before it. Gigino asked what they were doing.

"They are sentinels. They keep guard at the door. In case of danger they give the alarm to the workers inside the village."



"How I should like to become a sentinel!" exclaimed Gigino.

"Do not fear, you will be one," answered Fusca. "You give promise of being strong and healthy, and you have, as far as I can see, all the requirements of a soldier."

"A soldier! What, do ants keep armies?"

"Certainly. In case of war, all of us go to battle. Those of us who are the largest and have the strongest jaws take the lead."

"At our next battle," exclaimed Gigino, "I give you my word of honor, I shall be made a general on the field!"

So saying, he carried his right front leg to his head and saluted the sentinels as he passed by.

CHAPTER X

THE ANT'S FOOD

THEY went farther into the ant hill, Fusca leading Gigino from place to place. The house was made up of a number of rooms connected with each other by means of tunnels, all leading to a large central room where the ants met together. Feeling around, Gigino noticed with what care the house had been built.

"Besides being good nurses, strong miners, and excellent engineers, ants are also wonderful builders," he remarked.

"It would not do to deny it," said Fusca. "We are good builders, but the bees are better. We all work, each according to his whim, and thus we manage to make a home for ourselves."

"It would seem that in becoming an ant, I have become a person of some worth," Gigino added.

"The greatest on earth — a working ant," said Fusca.

The home of the ants has been called a house, but it is rather a city, well arranged and carefully guarded. Gigino had learned from the example set by Fusca how to measure distances. And now, when he came to the bottom of the city, he judged that its depth was at least three hundred times the length of his body. He recalled with a kind of pity the monuments of man, the tallest of which, the pyramids of Egypt, are barely ninety times the height of man. He was filled with surprise and wonder at these tiny insects, of which he was one.

He had had a long day and a hard one. It is not strange, therefore, that he began to feel hungry and tired.

"Everything is beautiful and wonderful," he said. "But since ants can do all things, tell me, what has one to do to get something to eat?"

Fusca smiled.

"Thus far I have given you food to eat, but now I have to teach you to eat for yourself."

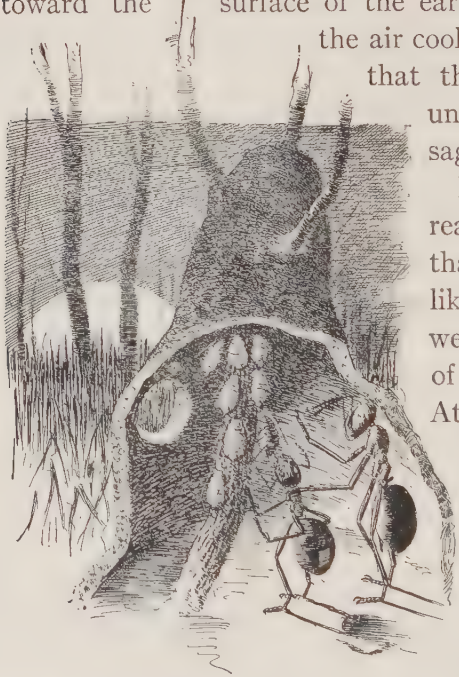
"Do not worry. At that I'll be an apt pupil."

"Come, then. Let us now visit the dairy."

"The dairy?"

"Surely. We're going to milk our cows."

"Cows? Cows?" Gigino kept repeating to himself, as he followed Fusca along a tunnel that led toward the surface of the earth. Soon he felt the air cooling and he knew that they had left the underground passage.



Finally they reached a large room that looked much like a tent. Here were a great number of insects stirring. At that moment a ray of moonlight came through an opening near the top of the tent. Gigino saw that the insects were like those he had seen on the stem of the rosebush in his garden, and which he knew by the name of aphids.

"Take one," said Fusca.

Gigino did so and, discovering that the fluid he sucked was the same sweet sirup he had tasted before, he lost no time in satisfying his hunger. Then they started back toward their quarters.

"I don't understand," said Gigino.

"It is easily explained. These animals live on the bark of plants, and we are very fond of the juice they gather. We keep them in order to get the sirup they make, just as men keep bees to get honey. But they have to eat. For that reason we build their nests around a plant where their food is found, and then we connect their nests with our home."

If ants could become insane, Gigino would surely have gone out of his mind. This was all too wonderful for him to understand.

"They are nurses, miners, engineers, soldiers, builders, artists,— everything!" he kept on saying. "Wonderful! Wonderful! Perhaps — who knows — there may be a professor of Latin grammar among them!"

CHAPTER XI

WHEN GIGINO GOT INSIDE

BUSY within the ant hill, the workers were still laboring on the new tunnel, making it wider and larger. Several of them, seeing Gigino and Fusca, stopped work and cried: "Give us something to eat. We're hungry."

Fusca approached one of the ants and at the same time said to Gigino: "You who have eaten enough for four ants, satisfy the other two."

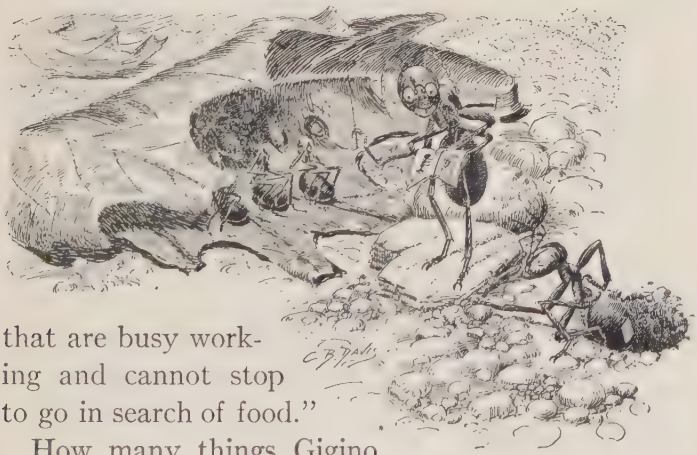
Before Gigino knew what was happening, the two workers, getting close to his mouth, one by one drew

out of his body a good part of the sirup that he had eaten.

This made Gigino angry.

"What kind of joke is this?" he asked Fusca, as soon as the workers had gone back to their labor.

"You must know," said Fusca, "that we have a sort of bag in which a part of our food is gathered and stored. This is our reserve supply, and from it we feed the larvæ, and, oftentimes, our companions



that are busy working and cannot stop to go in search of food."

How many things Gigino was learning! He had discovered a new world, of which he had never dreamed!

Early the next day Fusca came to him and said:

"It is a splendid day. Go out with the other young ants, for you are to get your lessons."

At these words Gigino felt faint. He staggered on all six legs toward the door and out into the air. There the young ants were gathered under a large leaf that was near the entrance to the ant hill. On a stone stood a very serious-looking ant. He was an old ant, who had, from his appearance, seen much of life and studied a great number of things.

"School! School! I knew it! That is an old professor!" cried Gigino.

"My dear young ants," began the Professor, "it is not a bad thing, it seems to me, that you, who have been but a short while in this world, should learn something about yourselves. It is a great pleasure to be able to give you an idea of the history of our people."

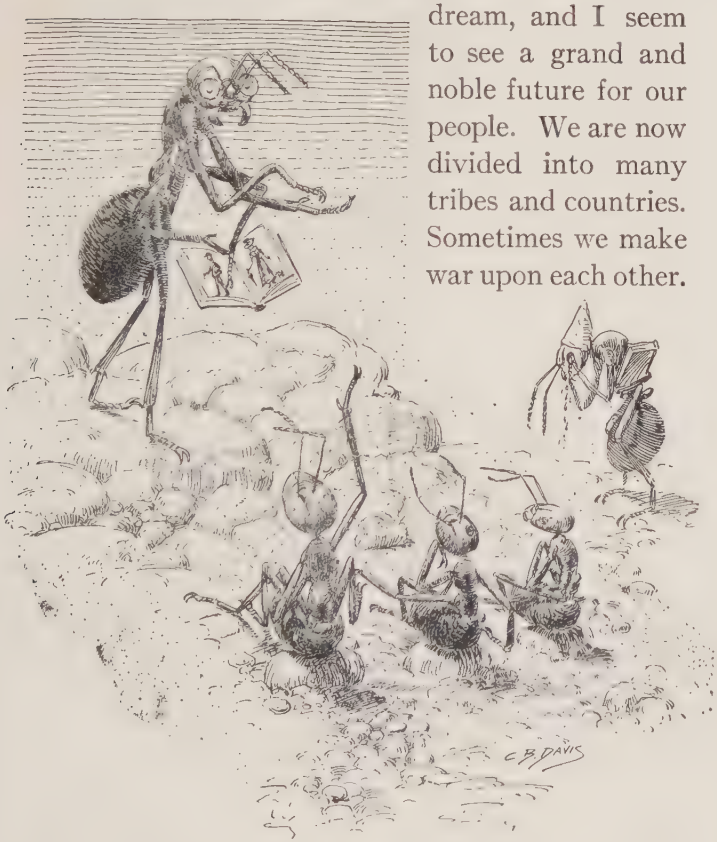
Clearing his throat, the Professor continued:

"We belong to a race of insects known all over the world. We range from the small brown ant to the big ant, from the peace-loving yellow ant to the bold Amazon ant, who lives by robbery and murder. We ourselves are fortunate. We can boast of living in a peaceful country built by our own labors. All of us are subject to the same laws. All of us enjoy equal rights. All of us live as brothers!"

At this point Gigino, fearing that the talk would be a long one, and believing that the same rules held in this school as in a boy's school, raised one of his legs as a sign that he wanted to be excused from the

lesson. But the Professor did not understand and went on with what he was saying:

"Often in my old age, I am carried away by a dream, and I seem to see a grand and noble future for our people. We are now divided into many tribes and countries. Sometimes we make war upon each other.



There is not the sweet spirit of peace among us that there should be. We kill any stranger that dares

come into our village. Who knows? The day may yet come when all the ants of the world, seeing their errors, will unite their forces and become the leading race of insects. Then we shall see the Lasius of Europe, and the Atta Cephalotes of America. . . ."

"Oh! Oh! Oh!"

The noise came from Gigino. Lasius and Cephalotes were too much for him. He thought he had escaped the old Latin grammar, but here it was again.

Poor Gigino!

CHAPTER XII

"PATCHES" ONCE MORE

THE Professor hurried toward Gigino to see what had happened.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"Oh! Oh! I feel pain all over my body. Here, here, and there, and over there!"

The Professor was also a doctor, and he began looking Gigino over.

"There are no bruises. Your body is formed exactly like that of any other ant. Does it hurt you here?"

"Yes, here and there — there . . ."

"Yes, yes, I understand. You're all right. You could carry a weight thirty times as heavy as your body. How do you feel here?"

"Very ill, indeed."

"I see nothing wrong with you. Breathe! thus . . . Your lungs are sound as can be. It may be a case of bad nerves. Let me see . . . let me see . . ."

"Yes, that's it, Professor, when you spoke those two big words, I felt very nervous."

"Well — no — I find nothing the matter here. You are in excellent shape. Were your body cut in two, you could keep on living, like all ants, in both parts. Perhaps it is your brain."

"I am afraid I have very little," said Gigino.

"Not at all! Your brain is large enough for your body."

But suddenly the Professor started. Then, putting his eyes close to Gigino's back, exclaimed:

"Yes, but there is trouble here."

"What is it? Tell me. . . ." cried Gigino, a little frightened.

"It's a curious thing — a thing I have never seen before."

"Tell me, please tell me, what it is!" exclaimed Gigino.

"Who knows? It appears to be a growth."

"A growth? Oh! dear me!"

"But of a soft kind of stuff that I do not know."

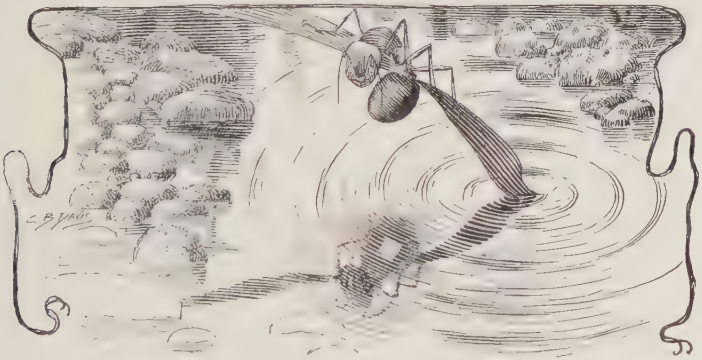
The other ants gathered in a circle about Gigino and the Professor. They all began talking at once.

"Curious . . . what in the world is that white patch?" went on the Professor.

"White patch!" screamed Gigino, rising quickly

on his hind legs, his body shaking like a leaf before the wind.

A terrible idea crossed his mind. Could it be possible! In an instant he sprung on to a blade of grass that hung over a little pool of water. He clung



to the tip with his front legs, and looked down at his reflection. There was no doubt about it now. The white patch, the white patch once more! Horrible! Was it never to end! He jumped to the ground, blind with anger. The young ants were waiting for him, buzzing and talking among themselves.

"White patch! What does it mean?"

"Surely that ant is none of ours."

"He's a stranger."

"An intruder."

"Kill him! Kill him!"

"Cut off his head!"

Poor Gigino! But he did not care to live, anyhow. He was stronger and bigger than the rest of them but he did not even move when the young ants, following their instincts and forgetting the Professor's words, surrounded our hero, and, with oper jaws, fell upon him.

CHAPTER XIII

"WHITE PATCH" IS RESCUED

THERE was a sudden cry and some one threw herself among them, exclaiming: "Stop this, all of you! What are you doing?"

It was Fusca. Placing herself in front of Gigino, she opened her jaws, ready to defend him. The ants fell back.

"Shame on you!" began Fusca. "Who told you, who are barely out of your eggs, to take into your hands the life of one of your companions?"

"He is not one of us," a young ant said.

"He has a white patch," cried another.

"Patch, or no patch," cried Fusca, in great anger, "his egg was recognized and carried into our house by another old ant and myself. I am surprised at your conduct."

The old Professor, with his two legs on high, shook his head.

"It's always the same," he murmured. "We will never learn. We will never overcome the desire to kill. What a pity! All my time wasted! What have they learned from my lesson? Nothing! Nothing!"

Fusca, pointing at Gigino, said:

"Look at him, and admit your error. He has a black body, and his breast and the front part of his head are reddish. Are not those the marks of our family? Who can deny that he is one of us?"

Gigino's enemies were convinced and they kissed him as a sign of peace. Then Fusca led Gigino away and left the young ants full of shame.

"Come home. You had better take a rest after all this excitement," she said tenderly.

When they had reached a quiet spot, Gigino began by thanking Fusca, but she would not listen to him.

"Who is going to remove my patch?" Gigino cried.

"It's nothing at all," said Fusca. "I have always seen something white on you and I like it."

"Even as an egg?"

"Yes. And even as a larva and a pupa. You have grown since then and the patch has grown, too. But don't think about it. Be a good, hard-working ant and nobody will harm you."

Poor Gigino! Not even as an ant could he get rid of those patches for which all the boys had laughed at him.

"It's all mamma's fault. If she had not put those old things on me —"

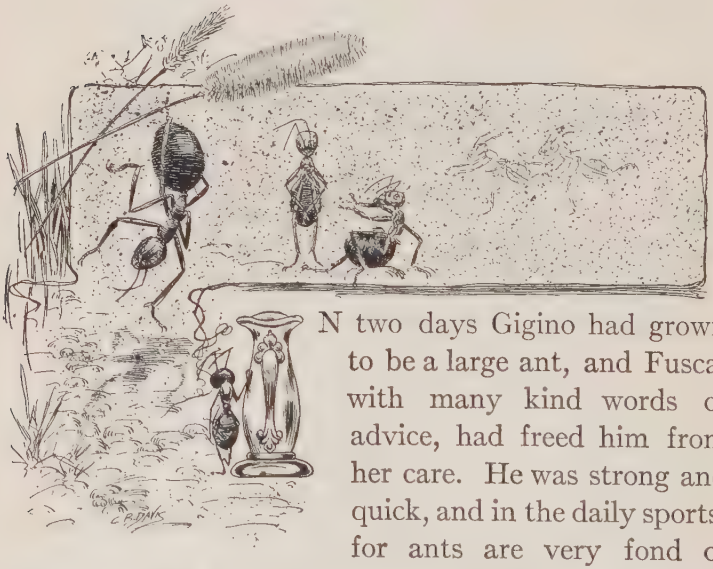
He stopped suddenly. The thought of his mother had crossed his mind.

"Poor, dear mamma!" he cried. "How long a time it is since I have seen you! Who knows how much you are weeping on my account? Be patient, mamma dear. Even though I am an ant, I still love you. I am still your little boy. Oh, if I had not been bad! I thank you now for the patch. It has made me think of you."

And poor Gigino wept. Indeed, he wept with all his one hundred and twenty-three eyes!

CHAPTER XIV

THE ATTACK ON THE ANT HILL



IN two days Gigino had grown to be a large ant, and Fusca, with many kind words of advice, had freed him from her care. He was strong and quick, and in the daily sports, for ants are very fond of contests, he had always carried off the honors. It is not to be wondered at, then, that he was looked upon as a sort of chief who might some day lead them to battle against an enemy.

Gigino liked the idea of being a soldier. He took great pride in all he did. Having found a hemp-seed, he had made it into a corselet. With the points of his jaws he made two holes in the sides of the

seed. Through them he put his two front legs. Inside the seed itself was his body. When he appeared in this strange coat, his companions stared in wonder. But they did not bother him. They knew how strong he was. What was more, there was trouble in the air, and everybody was in a state of great excitement.

For some days several strangers had been seen near the city, but they had taken flight as soon as discovered. A day or two later, as Gigino and his companions were gathered in the central room to rest from the heat, a cry arose from the sentinels' quarters.

"The Red ants! The Red ants!"

Some of the ants, with Gigino at their head, rushed toward the entrance, while others busied themselves with removing their eggs and larvæ to a place of safety. The enemy had overcome the sentinels and were making their way along the tunnel. Gigino and his companions blocked their way.

"One moment more and we should have been too late," said Fusca.

"They can't cross the wall our bodies make!" exclaimed Gigino, and he attacked the enemy.

Indeed, it was impossible for the Red ants, caught in that narrow passage, to make any headway.

They made a furious attack, but the brave Black ants put up a stubborn fight. Neither side would retreat. What was to be done?

"They must be in great numbers," said Fusca.

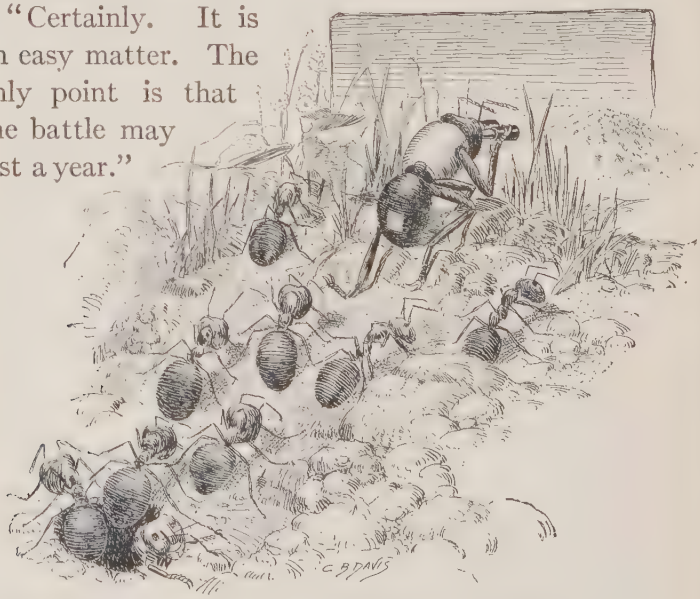
"Do you think so?" asked Gigino.

"I am certain. Otherwise, their plan having failed, they would have fled."

Gigino was lost in thought for a moment.

"Fusca," said he, "will you take charge of defending this passage?"

"Certainly. It is an easy matter. The only point is that the battle may last a year."



"Have no fear, the end will come quickly," said Gigino. "Will twenty comrades be enough for you?"

"Too many!"

"Then leave the matter in my hands."

Giving up twenty ants to Fusca, Gigino very quickly led the others through the tunnel that had been dug for the worm. They came to the exit, a hundred strong. Gigino climbed up a hill and looked in the direction of the main entrance. Fusca was right. The Red ants were there in large numbers, crowding the entrance.

"Forward!" cried Gigino to his companions "but mind, no noise!"

CHAPTER XV

GIGINO IS MADE A GENERAL ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE

RED ants are great thieves. They break into ant hills and carry away the eggs, larvæ, and pupæ. "Why?" you may ask. To make slaves of the ants that are born from them. These slaves keep house, wait upon their masters, and do all kinds of work.

Now the Red ants had come to capture the village in which Gigino lived. They were busy attacking, when suddenly there was a cry:

"Death to the robbers!"

It was Gigino with his army, dashing down upon the enemy. The Red ants were confused. They rushed here and there. Gigino charged and cut their army in two. The Reds fled in all directions from the village, the Black ants pursuing them. Gigino, in

the meanwhile, placed a leaf over the entrance in such a way as to trap all the Red ants in the tunnel and so as to allow room for only one ant to pass out at a time.

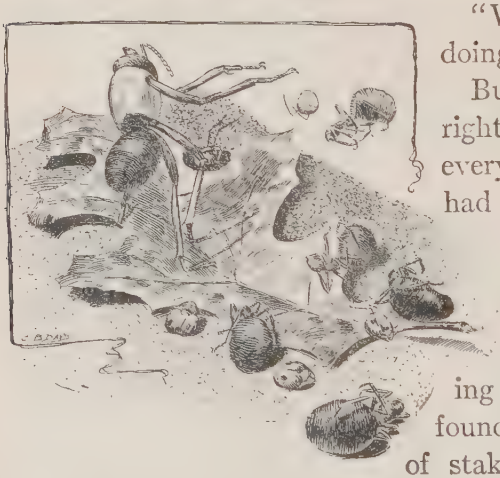
"Those inside must die," said he. "It is not well that they carry away a map of our city."

Placing himself across the leaf and setting his sharp jaws in order, he cried:

"Come, Fusca, drive out those dogs!"

How the Red ants shook with fear, when they heard the enemy's voice behind them. Hard pressed by Fusca and her band, they rushed for the entrance. When they came to it, they had to pass out one by one. That was what Gigino wanted.

As each ant came out, off went its head. Gigino had killed eleven of them, and was about to behead a twelfth victim, when Fusca cried out:



"What are you doing?"

But Gigino kept right on killing till every Red ant that had been inside the passage lay dead before him. Then, searching about him, he found a number of stakes, which he planted around the hole at the top of the hill. Upon these he stuck the heads of all those he had killed.

"This, it seems to me," he said, gazing upon his finished work, "will serve as a warning to our enemies!"

"They will return, do not fear," said Fusca. "The Reds never say die. To-morrow they will come back stronger than ever."

While Fusca was speaking, a noise was heard in the distance.

It was the victorious Black army returning from

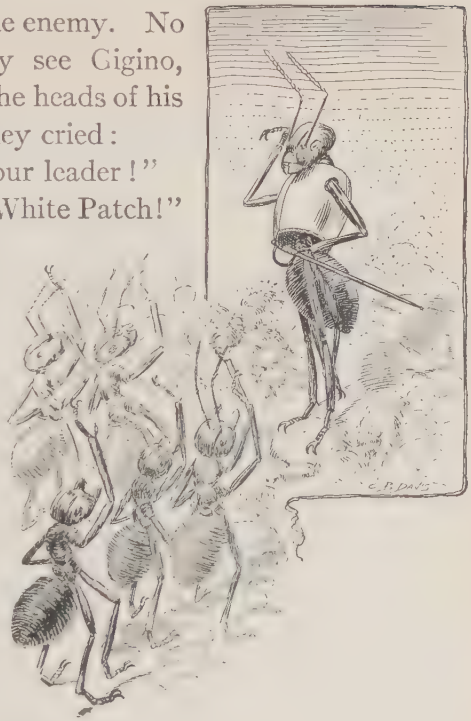
the pursuit of the enemy. No sooner did they see Gigino, surrounded by the heads of his victims, than they cried:

"Hurrah for our leader!"

"Hurrah for White Patch!"

Gigino felt his patch, and, thinking of his mother, said:

"Poor mamma! If you could only see me now, what joy it would give you! Your Gigino has become a General!"



CHAPTER XVI

AMBITION

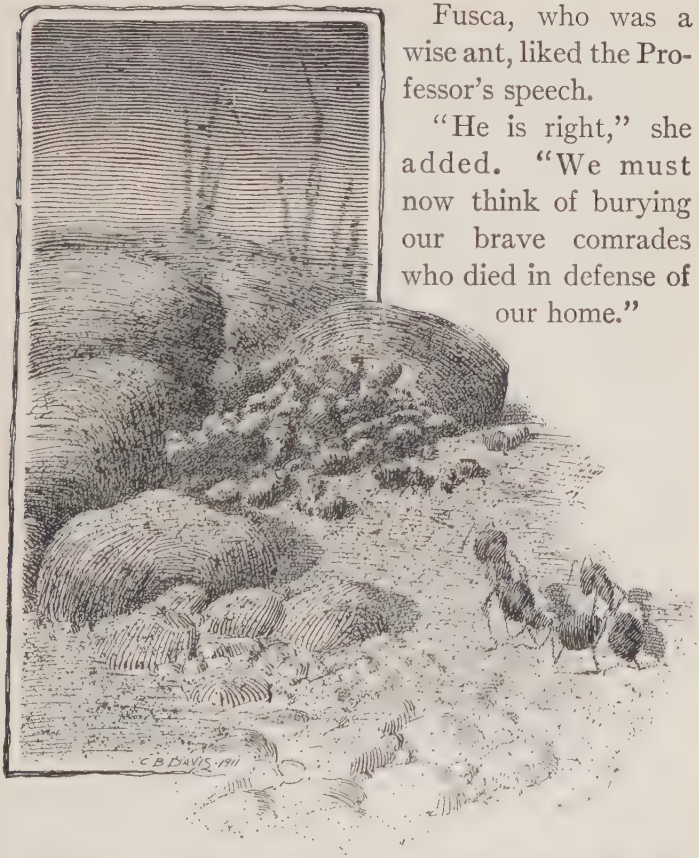
ABOVE the shouts of joy there was heard a voice, saying:

"You did well to defend our home. But war in itself is wrong. It is only just when there is no other way out of the trouble."

It was the old Professor.

"Therefore," he continued, "instead of giving way to shouts of joy, you would do better to feel sad because a powerful band of thieves has taken you from your work, which is the glory of our people. War is always bad — bad even for those that win. Look about you. See how many of your comrades are dead. They are so

many good nurses lost to children, so many jaws taken from the labor that brings comfort to our people."



Fusca, who was a wise ant, liked the Professor's speech.

"He is right," she added. "We must now think of burying our brave comrades who died in defense of our home."

While one part of the army returned to do the work in the ant hill, the other part searched for the dead and wounded. The wounded were brought

into the house and looked after with great care. The dead were quietly placed in the cemetery. Do not be surprised, as Gigino was. The ants have a place set apart for their dead.

While his companions returned to their home, Gigino lingered about so that he might look over the field of battle once more and think quietly about what had happened.

"Let the Professor say what he will," thought he. "I feel within me the power of a great soldier. I am an ant born for noble deeds. This is the first step. To-day I am a general. To-morrow, when the Reds come again to the attack, I shall win another victory. Who can stop me from becoming — yes — from becoming King of all the ants?"

At dawn the next day Gigino entered the hall where the ants were assembled. He told them that he intended to engage the Reds in open battle. The Professor shook his head.

"If you do that, we who are now in the right will be in the wrong," he said.

"We must put an end to them once for all," answered Gigino. "Moreover, my victory of yesterday ought to assure you that we can defeat them again."

"Worse and worse!" added the Professor. "You begin to boast of what you did for your comrades. Remember, sir, it was no more than your duty!"

"Duty or no duty," went on Gigino, "had it not been for me, who knows what would have happened to you? My plans are made, and in a moment I will march forth with my army."

At these words the Professor became very angry.

"*Your* army! *Your* army! Who gives you the right to take the lives of your comrades into your hands? Have you forgotten that in our city everybody has the same duties and the same rights, — that we are all equal?"

"If we are all equal," said Gigino, "why did not some one else do what I did yesterday? Right or not, to battle I go. The soldiers trust in me and will follow me!" So saying, he left the hall.

Indeed, a great number of ants, giddy with victory, took to the idea and followed. Gigino called them together and marched them to an open space in front of the ant hill. There he formed them into companies and drilled the soldiers in all that relates to battle.

After a while he stopped, and calling the ants about him, spoke to them.

"Officers and soldiers! You have already given me proof of your courage, and I have no doubt that to-day you will add to your glory."

"Hurrah for General White Patch!"

Well pleased, Gigino continued:

"Officers and soldiers, victory is sure to come to us. Stand firm, follow orders, fight till the end."

Then he gave the command over to Big-Head and to Big-Tongs, two brave ants whom he had made his aides, while he himself went off to study out the attack.

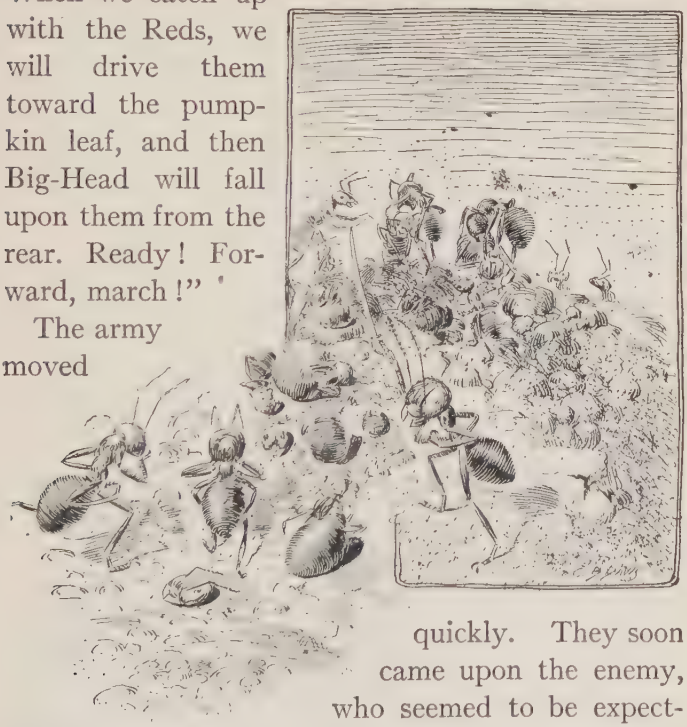
Having seen the lay of the land, Gigino returned.

"Any news?" he asked.

"Our enemies," said Big-Tongs, "have been seen not far from here. They fled as soon as they saw us."

"Big-Head, take fifty of the strongest soldiers

and lie in ambush behind that large pumpkin leaf yonder," ordered Gigino. "The rest follow me. When we catch up with the Reds, we will drive them toward the pumpkin leaf, and then Big-Head will fall upon them from the rear. Ready! Forward, march!"



The army moved quickly. They soon came upon the enemy, who seemed to be expecting the attack. Gigino lost no time in crossing his soldiers to the enemy's rear.

"What blockheads!" thought Gigino; "they know nothing about warfare."

Then the Blacks rushed upon the Reds, who fled in the direction of the pumpkin leaf.

"Drive them on!" cried Gigino to his soldiers.

But there was hardly any need. It seemed as if the Reds themselves were glad enough to retreat, and they never stopped running until they came to the pumpkin leaf. Suddenly the division under Big-Head began its attack.

The Reds were attacked from the rear and driven back from the front. There was terrible slaughter. Few of the Reds lived to tell the story.

Gigino and the Blacks had won another great victory!

"Hurrah! White Patch! White Patch!"

Gigino, proud in his glory, led the army to a sheltered spot, and, calling a halt, addressed them.

"Officers and soldiers!" he said. "A number of the old ants are opposed to us, and yet, as you may see, my plan could not have had a better ending. We are rid of our enemies."

"True! True!" cried the soldiers.

"The government under which we live at present is absurd. If the idea that all ants are equal continues to hold, then we, who do not believe in it, should break away from the old ants. Choose, therefore, from among you a young ant of brains and strength, in whom you can place confidence. Make him your chief, your king, even your emperor."

"Yes! Yes!" shouted the soldiers.

"You need an ant of great talent, like myself, an

ant who knows you as I do, and who, when the need arises, can win a battle such as this. You should act at once. Choose whom you will, but choose you must."

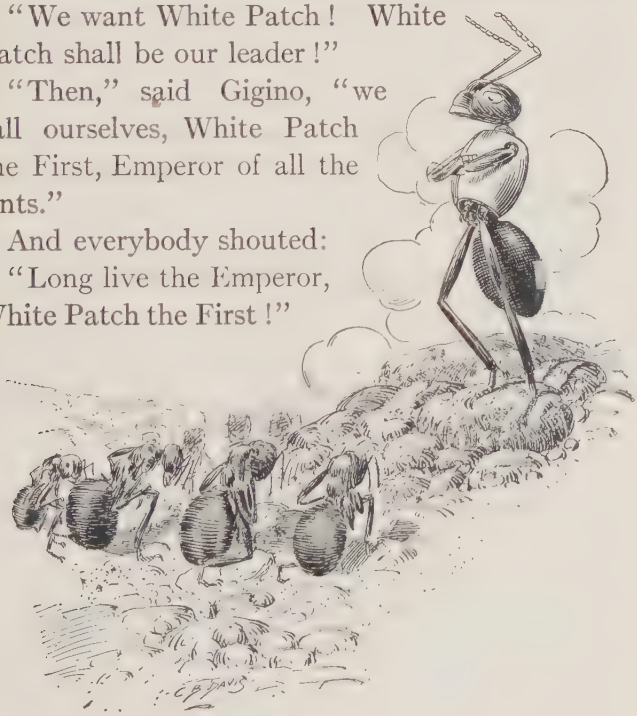
With these words Gigino ended. He started to walk away, but the army cried out long and loud:

"We want White Patch! White Patch shall be our leader!"

"Then," said Gigino, "we call ourselves, White Patch the First, Emperor of all the Ants."

And everybody shouted:

"Long live the Emperor, White Patch the First!"



CHAPTER XVII

THE INVASION

GIGINO'S fondest dream had come true. As he led back his army in triumph to the city, he could not help feeling a sense of pride.

"I know I never was what teachers call a bright boy, but I have always had my share of intelligence. It was natural, therefore, that as soon as I had a chance to show my ability, I should rise to some high place."

In this frame of mind he marched on, building for himself wonderful air castles. The Emperor of the Ants was no common person. He had done great things and he was to do still greater. At last the Latin professor would see of what stuff Gigino was made. The whole city would sing his praises.

Soon they reached the ant hill, but it looked deserted. The gate was not guarded, and there were signs of a furious struggle.

What had happened

"Come!" shouted Gigino, and he pressed on, followed by his aides. When he came to the central hall, he was surrounded by a crowd of strange ants.

"Forward!" a voice cried. "We must prevent the army from reëntering."

Then Gigino knew what a terrible fix he was in. The Reds had invaded the ant hill during his absence and captured the whole city. Where now was Gigino's greatness!

A mocking voice shouted:

"Lo! Here is the general with the hempseed! The great blockhead! Ha! ha! so you thought to destroy us on the open battle field? Foolish one! Our spies watched your movements. We left a small band behind us to divert you from our main attack. And while you were enjoying yourself driving them back, we took your city. Allow me to present you with my compliments."

Gigino burned with rage, but he was powerless, and could say nothing.

A shout of "Victory!" rang through the hall.

The Black army had been captured, and Gigino was forever ruined.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE DEATH OF FUSCA

THE Reds held a council. "We have won a great battle," said their leader, "a very great battle. We have destroyed our enemy and have gained possession of their city. There is no need, therefore, to carry with us the eggs, larvæ, and pupæ. We will leave a garrison behind us to see that the newly born are made into slaves as soon as they are fit to work."

What a sorrowful state of things Gigino had caused! His foolish ambition had destroyed the city, brought death to his fellows, and slavery to all the unborn ants.

"Oh, had I but listened to the advice of my elders!" he moaned.

"Now take the prisoners out to the open and pre-

pare for the executions," roared the leader of the Reds.

Had Gigino still been a boy, he would have felt his skin creep and turn pale.

"That old ant, first!" the Red general commanded.

The Professor was seized by two soldiers.

"Fellow Ants!" he said. "Before dying, I appeal to you all, regardless of race. How long shall these foolish wars last? What need is there for you to destroy one another and thus lessen our numbers? Children of Nature, let us rather unite in peace. Then shall we, the most intelligent of all insects, live happily forever. I beg you, sisters and brothers, to hear the voice of a dying ant. Unite! Unite and live in peace!"

Gigino was moved. The enemy must relent, must be merciful, he thought. But, at a sign from their leader, off went the head of the old Professor. The other prisoners were treated in like manner.

Finally, Gigino's nurse was brought forth.

"Fusca!" he cried with a sob.

"Patience!" said the kind ant. "What saddens me most is that our children will become slaves!"

Gigino could bear it no longer. He threw himself in front of her.

"No! No!" he cried. "Spare my dear Fusca!

I am the cause of everything. I only am to blame. She was opposed to the war. But I . . ."

He could say no more, for one of the Reds drew him back and Fusca's head fell.

Gigino, almost crazed with grief, cried out:

"Kill me! Kill me!"

"One moment!" said a voice.

They all turned.

A Red ant had just arrived on the scene, covered with dust and with wounds.

CHAPTER XIX

THE COUNCIL OF WAR

STANDING in the midst of his companions, the Red ant spoke.

"Before doing away with that hempseed general there," he said, "it would not be a bad idea to court-martial him."

Gigino thought the situation was brightening, but he thought so only for a second.

"As you see," continued the ant, "I am one of those whom you sent to turn the Black army from the main attack."

"Good!" cried the Red general. "What is the news? Where are our friends?"

"Friends!" said the ant, bitterly. "They are killed!"

"All? What do you mean?" cried the Reds.

"Ask White Patch. He knows."

Angry shouts came from the assembled Reds.

"What!" exclaimed the Red general to Gigino. "You did this — you, a member of a tribe that call themselves peaceful!"

"There is more to tell," continued the lone survivor. "On my way here, I saw him talking to the Black army. It is true! Think of it, he was having himself made Emperor of all the ants — Emperor White Patch the First, they called him."

There was more hope! The Reds were furious. But Gigino was willing to die. He had caused the death of all his friends. What, then, was the use of living? None!

Then the leader of the Reds spoke once more.

"Since he has been guilty of the most unheard-of crimes, let him suffer the most unheard-of death. Tear him leg by leg, antenna by antenna. Let his head be the last to fall, so that he may see the punishment with his own eyes."

Gigino almost fainted with fright. He cried for mercy, but there was no mercy for him. He was thrown on the ground. The guards seized his two hind legs, and pulled at them with all their might. The legs were so strong that they would not come

off. Then the guards tried the next two legs. These came off rather easily — Gigino all the while crying:

"Murderers! Thieves! Let me be!"

A strange thing! The loss of his two legs caused Gigino no pain. He felt as strong as ever.

The guards now seized his front legs. But these could not be pulled out. The leader of the Reds became angry.

"You are good for nothing!" he cried. "Leave it to me. One bite of my jaws will take his head clean off."

And he went boldly toward Gigino. But he had hardly taken a step when he fell, crying, "I'm killed!"

Gigino thought a miracle had happened, and was about to offer up a prayer of thanks, when he saw that another stranger had come among them.

"From the frying pan into the fire," he muttered.

CHAPTER XX

THE ENEMY IN YELLOW GLOVES

THE new arrival was a wasp, whose long, powerful legs were armed with teeth, so that they looked like saws. She had pounced upon that ant court and without more ado had started in to kill judges and prisoners alike. Only one or two escaped, by rushing headlong into the ant hill. Gigino stood still with fear. He had about made up his mind to hurry away, when the wasp jumped upon him.

"All is over!" cried the Emperor.

"How hard you are! How hard!" buzzed the wasp.

Then Gigino remembered his armor, and, feeling himself safe, gave a sigh of relief.

"Blessed be the hempseed!" he murmured.

The wasp eyed Gigino in great surprise. What was wrong? This was a strange ant, indeed! She examined her legs over and over again to see if the saws were still strong. She feared they were worn out. No, they were all in good order.

"Pardon me," she asked, "but would you mind telling me why you are so hard?"

"I was always hard," bravely answered Gigino, "even as a boy at school. Who are you?"

"I am a murderous wasp."

"And at large!"

"Yes, and we are called murderous because we live in all sorts of places and feed upon spiders, flies, and ants, — at least, when they're not as hard as you."

"Listen!" said Gigino. "There may be some excuse for eating spiders and flies, but there is none for falling upon ants. That is horrible!"

There was a pause. Gigino was shocked, but he could not help admiring this strong, beautiful insect.

"A murderer, perhaps, but very elegant. A princess in yellow gloves," he said to himself.

The wasp, in her beautiful robe of bright yellow, was slender, graceful, and full of life. She was more beautiful than any wasp Gigino had ever seen as a boy. But that is not strange, because in those days he had looked at nothing carefully.

"What a slender waist," thought he. "Now I understand why they say mamma has a waist like a wasp's."

Once more he thought of his mother and longed to see her again. His heart softened, and he felt grateful to the yellow wasp. She had brought

back to him thoughts of home — his home so far, far away!

The wasp herself was flattered by the attention Gigino paid her.

"Well!" she said. "Do not worry. I will not harm you. Give me your hand and let us make peace."

And because Gigino held back a little, she added:

"Come, come. You are not still shocked, are you? If I am not mistaken, you ants were busy killing each other when I came upon you. Surely I may be pardoned!"

"Yes, you are right," answered Gigino. "I owe my life to you, and I thank you. And yet you must understand that we ants represent the strongest, the most peaceful, the most intelligent, the . . ."

But Gigino had no time to go on. With a sudden motion the wasp had jumped on a large caterpillar that happened to be passing at that instant. It was all done in the twinkling of an eye. The poor caterpillar was caught.

"Have you killed him?" cried Gigino.

The wasp shook her head.

"Killed him!" she exclaimed. "I am not so foolish."

Buzzing merrily, she seized the caterpillar with her jaws and began to carry him off. She dragged him to a little sandy cave which was protected by a wall of stones, twigs, and dirt.

Gigino was surprised to see the wasp so strong and quick. He followed her step by step. Down into the cave rolled the wasp and the caterpillar. At the bottom she let go of him, and shook the dirt from her body. Gigino looked down from the edge of the cave. He was afraid the wasp might have been injured.

"Are you hurt?" he asked.

"Not at all," answered the wasp, gayly. "This is the least part of my work. The caterpillar must now be carried into the house."

Gigino went down into the cave. He wanted to see what more was going to be done.

"I'll help you," he said.

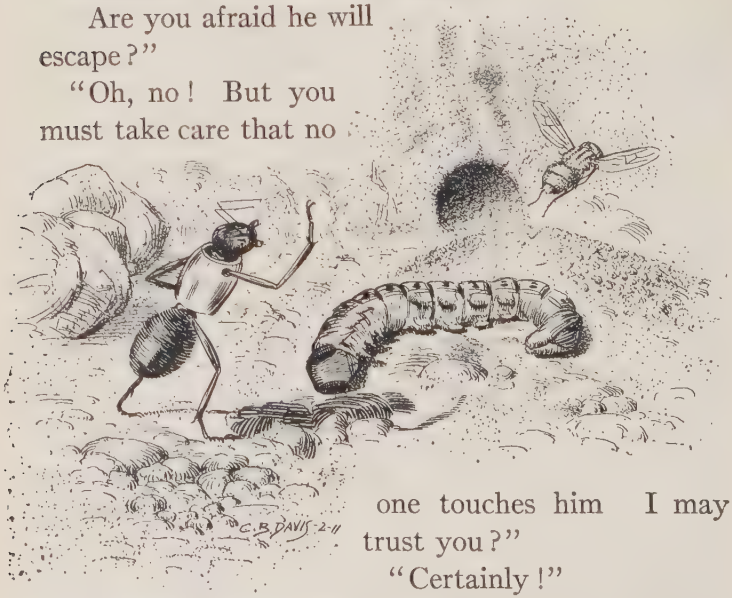
"No, no!" was the reply. "We are used to such hard labor and do not need the assistance of the strongest and the most intelligent race of ants."

These words struck home. Gigino bowed his head.

"However," answered the wasp, "I should be thankful if you would keep an eye on this gentleman, while I look into my house."

Are you afraid he will escape?"

"Oh, no! But you must take care that no one touches him I may trust you?"



"Certainly!"

The wasp disappeared, buzzing happily, and Gigino remained to guard the caterpillar. But no sooner

had the wasp gone, than a small gray fly alighted on the body of the poor caterpillar.

"Get off! He's not your property," Gigino shouted.

A second later, the gray fly went off, saying:

"If he's not my property, at least I am sure that he belongs to my children."

When the wasp returned, Gigino, measuring the caterpillar with his eye, said:

"Not a piece missing. Tell me, are you going to eat all of him?"

"Eat him! Nothing of the kind."

"Why did you kill him, then?"

"But I haven't killed him. He is only asleep. If he were dead, he would rot, and that would not be healthful. I could not keep him in the house. No, no. The caterpillar is alive and will go on living. Only he cannot move. I have put him to sleep. Now to work!"

"You're going to keep him in the house! What are you going to do with him there?"

"Why, keep him for my children. He belongs to them!"

"Well!" exclaimed Gigino. "That's just what the gray fly said."

The wasp cried out, startled:

"The gray fly! Tell me! A gray fly has been on my caterpillar? Speak!"

"Y-e-s," stammered Gigino, who did not understand why she should make such a fuss over nothing. Yet he was afraid something had gone wrong.

"She stayed but a moment," he added. "I drove her away immediately."

"Ah! Thief! Thief! The trick is done!"

The wasp examined the caterpillar very closely.

"Here are the tracks," she said. "To think I have done all the work — all for that tramp. I carry the caterpillar home and shelter him! And all for her children! O wretch!"

The wasp was so bitter that Gigino did not dare interrupt her. He retreated into his hempseed.

"If her anger were turned against me," he murmured, "even a brass shield could not save my life."

CHAPTER XXI

THE FAREWELL

"ALL useless work! All my work lost!" went on the wasp.

"Pardon me," said Gigino, whose curiosity soon got the better of his fright. "Will you tell me what your children have to do with the children of the gray fly, and what they have to do with this poor animal, who is slumbering here so quietly?"

"It was for my children that I captured this caterpillar. Don't you know that?"

"Why do you not take him home, then?"

"That would be very, very foolish. The gray fly has taken him for her children, now."

"Be patient with me, for I am puzzled. Why do you say that she has taken him, when the caterpillar is still here?"

"Ah! Ah! You do not know. Well, then, listen. We wasps capture these insects, put them to sleep, and then take them home for the purpose of laying

our eggs in them. When the eggs hatch, the little larvæ have their food ready at hand, and they eat until they develop into wasps. Now, those gray flies have to do the same thing for their young. But they have neither the will nor the energy to hunt as we do. They simply flit around our homes, and when they see us carrying in our prey, down they come the moment we turn our backs. If you had not warned me, I would have placed my eggs in the caterpillar, feeling sure of having provided food for my children. But what would have happened? The fly's eggs would have hatched first. Her larvæ would then have eaten up all the food, and there would have been none left for my children. They would have starved to death. What an outrage! Now I have to do all my work over again. It's the only way. In hard times one must be brave, and must go right on working and hoping for the best."

Little by little her anger melted away.

"Farewell!" she added. "I must now make up for lost time. To work! To work!"

She spread her wings for flight and buzzed away, while Gigino cried out after her:

"Farewell, dear wasp!"

Gigino felt sympathy for the wasp. She may have been a murderer, but what she did was for her children's sake. For this reason the fly, too, was a thief. Gigino began to understand that it was the

way of life. All insects, however bad they seem to be, provide homes and food and safety for their children until the little ones are grown beautiful and strong, and able to care for themselves.

Absorbed in this thought, Gigino was not aware that he was nearing the ant hill, the scene of so many misfortunes, until he saw two ants dragging along some hempseeds. A sharp pain shot through his heart.

"My friends," he exclaimed with much feeling, "don't you know me?"

They were two old comrades.

"Well, indeed!" they said, stopping. "What are you doing now?"

"Living the life of an exile. And you, tell me, what are you doing? Where are you taking these seeds?"

"To our village, where our masters are."

"What, your masters! Do you still call the ant hill your home?"

"Naturally. We serve the Red ants, because fate has so willed. Thanks to our good work, we can still have a house of our own. But it is already late, and we have to return home. Good-by, good-by, Emperor White Patch!"

Gigino was shocked at the ease with which his comrades had adapted themselves to slavery. He cried out after them:

"Slaves! Slaves!"

Filled with anger, he continued his walk. Not for a moment did he stop to think that he himself was the cause of their slavery. But let us not judge him too harshly. After all, he was only a boy turned into an ant, and what more could be expected of him? His mind was always jumping from one idea to another. At that very moment he was busy thinking of the horrors of slavery, and not of the blind ambition that was the cause of his comrades' downfall.

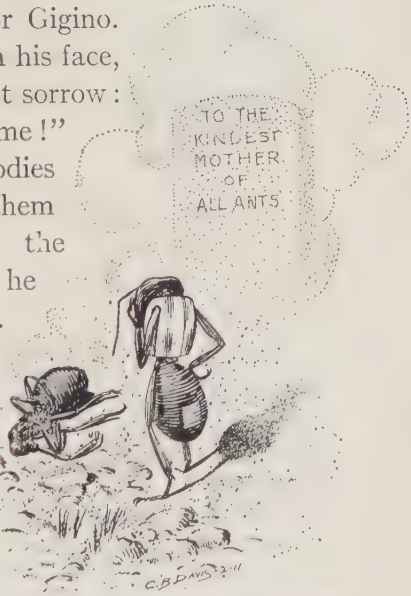
A short distance from the ant hill, he stopped, for he heard a strange sound, as if some one were chewing bones. He walked toward the place from

which the sound came. No sooner had he reached it than he stood still in horror. Before him were heaped up the dead bodies of his comrades, and in their midst were three black ants eating away as fast as they could.

"Ah, wretches!" cried Gigino. In great anger he fell upon and killed them. Then he gazed in sorrow on the remains of his old comrades. It was a moment of great suffering for Gigino. Throwing himself down on his face, he cried in tones of deepest sorrow:

"Forgive me! Forgive me!"

Then he raised the bodies one by one, and carried them to the graveyard. To the Professor and to Fusca, he gave the places of honor. Before leaving, he looked for the last time at the grave of his loving nurse, and sobbed out:



"Fusca, my dear, if ants used tombstones, I would erect one to you. It should be beautiful and large — one that everybody could see. On it I would carve in golden letters: 'To the Kindest Mother of All Ants.'"

CHAPTER XXII

A PRIVATE SECRETARY

"WHAT shall I do now?"

This was the question Gigino put to himself as he walked on alone in the world, without family and without friends! Such was the sad state of the poor fellow, who only a few hours before had been elected the First Emperor of the Ants!

"However," murmured Gigino, "even Napoleon was exiled to the island of St. Helena."

Yet this thought gave him little comfort.

He again passed the cave where the wasp lived, and saw that she had carefully covered up the entrance.

"Ah, me! Every one has a home . . . I alone have no place in which to spend the night. Home! Yes, I, too, have a home. Oh, if I could only find it!"

The idea was a good one, but where, where could he go? How was he to find the vine-covered white house with the green shutters?

"I am crazy. How can I, a poor ant, find the road to my house? I do not know even where it is. And I shall lose my way. For me, every blade of grass is a tree, every bush seems a forest, and every pebble is like a mountain."

Thoroughly downhearted he kept on walking, going wherever his legs carried him, and dreaming whatever dreams came into his head. Soon he came to a large oak tree.

"If I climb up to the top," he thought to himself, "who knows but that I may be able to see my home!"

He began to climb, and though he was hungry and sad, he made rapid progress. By and by he stopped and looked about. He could see nothing. He went up farther. Still nothing! At last he came to the topmost leaf. Around him he saw a great world, but nothing more. With his ant-eyes he could not see very far, and all his labor was in vain. He sat down to rest, when suddenly he heard a noise near by. Only then did he become aware that he was standing next to one of those large brown balls that grow on oak leaves.

Gigino climbed the ball and was not a little surprised to discover that the sound was coming from within. It was a thin sound, like that made by a sharp little saw as it cuts its way through a hard piece of wood. Gigino walked all around the little

ball, examining it very carefully. There was no hole. What could it mean? As he stood there, wondering, he heard a tiny voice saying:

"At last! At last!"

He turned suddenly. A little head was peeping through a hole in the ball and looking about in great surprise.

"How beautiful the world is!" added the tiny voice, with a thrill of pleasure.

"You are welcome, then!" cried Gigino. "Come, hurry, get out."

From the hole came two tiny legs, followed by a body no bigger than a mite. He was a black little fellow that looked for all the world like a fly.

"Goodness!" exclaimed Gigino. "A little fly!"

"I beg your pardon," replied the other. "I am not a fly. I am a Gallfly."

"A Gallfly?"

"Yes, and I belong to the great family of Insects."

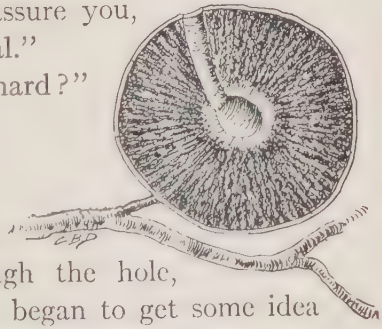
"Well, well, you are a relative, then. Tell me, how did you get inside that ball?"

"Why, I never did get inside of it. I simply came out of it."

Gigino stared at him.

"This is a new thing! How can any one come out of a ball unless he gets into it?"

"It's our way," said the fly. "I'll tell you how it is done. The eggs are laid on a wounded oak leaf. Then the leaf swells up around the wound, making a ball, which draws into itself the sap of the plant. In a short time the egg inside hatches. When the larva is born, it finds that the sap is its food and the ball its home. There the larva stays for some time, until it becomes a pupa. After a while it begins to bore a hole from the inside of the ball, and soon a way is opened through which the fly comes forth — a perfect insect, as I am. But, I assure you, we have to bore a great deal."



"Why, is this ball very hard?" asked Gigino.

"Go inside and see."

Gigino did not wait to be invited a second time. He squeezed himself through the hole, and, as he went along, he began to get some idea of the work his new friend had done. The room on the inside was covered with a very hard material. It was almost as hard as stone.

"And you," exclaimed Gigino, "have been able to bore a hole through such a wall! My compliments to you!"

"Thank you. If you knew how happy I am! It's no great fun to be closed up in there. But I knew I should get out some day, and that I should have wings and fly about in the air. At last I am free! O blessed light!"

'Would that I, too, had wings!" murmured Gigino.

Then an idea came to him.

"Listen, dear friend," he said. "You have just been born. You can begin life with a good deed. I want you to do me a favor. I assure you I will never forget it. Are you willing?"

"I don't know what you want yet."

"You are right. I want you to find a home with a balcony and a grapevine growing all over it."

"But how do you expect me, just come into the world, to recognize the place?"

This was right, and Gigino found it hard to give the young insect a clear description of his home. Finally, when he thought the insect understood, he said:

"You, who have wings, ought to be able to fly in all directions and then come back and tell me whether you have found the place that I have described. Are you willing to do this for me?"

"I am, because at the same time I shall have an opportunity to use my wings."

Gallfly flew off from the leaf and away he went.

"If you succeed," the Emperor cried out, "I will make you my private secretary."

CHAPTER XXIII

HOME STREET

HOW long Gigino waited on that leaf he could not say, but it seemed an age. When he saw Gallfly returning, he cried:

"Well?"

"Well," answered the other, alighting on the leaf, "I think I have discovered something that answers your description."

"Really? Is it far away? Which way? Where?"

"Be calm for a moment, please. The house that I saw is in the direction toward which this branch points."

"Are you sure? Then that is the way!"

"Exactly."

Gigino took good note of the direction.

"My dear friend," he said, "I am very grateful to you! Now I am going away, but I hope we shall meet again."

Then, having embraced the Gallfly, Gigino left him

and started down the oak tree. He went down the same way he had come up, but in going down he went very slowly and carefully.

"Slowly!" you will say. "Why slowly, if he wanted so much to get home?"

Yes, yes. But he walked slowly for the very reason that he was in a hurry, — not like some folks who go so fast that they forget where they are going! No, — Gigino did not intend to make any mistake this time. He was going home and he was making sure that he would not forget the way. Of course, as a boy, Gigino had always done things in a great hurry. But as an ant, he had learned that in the end care allows one to do a thing quickly and well. Instead, therefore, of running headlong down the tree, he went very slowly, turning again and again, studying out every step, and calculating his direction. And so, when he reached the ground, he found himself with his head turned toward the very point he wished to reach. Now, in order to come to the end of his journey, the only thing he had to do was to walk straight ahead.

"What a pity," he thought, "that insects are not asked to name the streets. I should call this 'Home Street'!"

It was sunset. As he walked, Gigino saw about him a great many insects of all kinds, hurrying to their homes.

"Even I am going home!" thought he.

This put new life into him, and made him feel less tired and even less — hungry.

He was moving rapidly on, when he was startled by the noise of a quarrel. It was a fight to the death, to judge from the cries and the threats that he heard.

He turned quickly toward the scene of battle, and saw a wasp holding a poor grasshopper fixed to the ground. The wasp was about to stab the grasshopper with her long needle.

"Stop that! Stop that!"

It was Gigino's voice. The wasp loosened her hold and the grasshopper jumped away into his home. In great fury, the wasp pounced upon Gigino, but the same thing happened to her that had happened to the first wasp Gigino had met. Her needle slid along the hempseed.

"My dear wasp," said Gigino, laughing, "you are fooled, just as your cousin was."

"But why do you interfere in my affairs?" asked the wasp. "I have three grasshoppers at home and

need only one more. I had him just now, and you let him escape."

"Are not three enough for you?"

"No, they are not. I need four. The larvæ will not get enough to eat, otherwise. Now, thanks to you, I have to begin my hunt over again."

"How could I help it? The poor grasshopper aroused my pity. Good-by, my dear, and pray excuse me."

Gigino had never for a moment lost the direction in which he was to travel. He went straight on his way. But the road home was a long one.

After a little while he became aware that another insect was traveling the same road as he, but with far more speed and comfort. She was a very elegant insect. She had a long, thin body of a dark color, with a stain of yellow on her throat and head. She flew about on her beautiful wings, as if she were in search of something.

"My dear Dragon Fly," said Gigino, raising his head, "how much would I give at this moment to have a pair of wings like yours!"

The winged insect looked at him with bulging eyes, and laughed lightly.

"I am not a dragon fly," she said.

"What are you, then?" asked Gigino, stopping.

"I? I am a creature held in great honor by your relatives."

"We can treat each other like old friends, then."

"Exactly," answered the insect, alighting on a blade of grass, and looking around as if to study her position.

Gigino came nearer to her and was about to ask her a question, when he saw her holding fast to a blade of grass. She was trembling all over.

"What is the matter with her now?" thought Gigino.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BOAT RIDE

AFTER a while the insect flew up, and there on the blade of grass lay a number of eggs. They were small and of a yellow color.

"It's all done!" said she. "We live only for a short time, but first we make sure to provide for those that are to come after us."

Gigino, who up to this time had been silent, could not help exclaiming:

"What a good mother you are!"

"Oh, yes!" answered the insect, "but perhaps it would be better for you if I were not!"

"I do not understand you. If you are not a dragon fly, may I know what you are?"

"Enough! In my time I have been a great lover

of ants, but I do not know whether the ants love me as I do them. Go your way. I am going to stay behind to put these eggs in a safe place. I hope that they will meet many ants as good as yourself, because you must, indeed, be an excellent one!"

The way in which these words were spoken carried a strange meaning to Gigino He did not think it wise to stop to thank the insect, so he went on his way without more words. He walked on in silence, dreaming of what he had heard and trying to get at the hidden meaning. He had gone some distance and was still troubled over the matter, when a voice behind him called:

"Do you really want to know who I am?"

Gigino turned round. There was the insect he had just left.

"Now we are far away from my eggs. You cannot find them, however hard you may try. So I feel safe in telling you who I am. I am the Ant-Lion!"

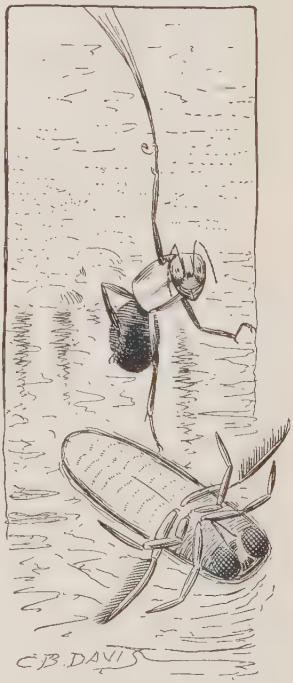
It was Gigino's turn to laugh. That name, said in such a boasting way, seemed to put our hero in good humor.

"I beg your pardon, Madam Ant-Tiger, for not having recognized you from the first. Farewell, Ant-Leopard. I beg of you, my dear Ant-Lion, to be careful of the little lions that you have laid in your nest."

But with all his joking, Gigino had to confess to

himself that the name of the insect had impressed him. He seemed to remember having heard his companions at school warn him to beware of the Ant-Lion.

Meanwhile Gigino kept walking on, without ever losing the direction that was to lead him home. After some time he came to a lake. All his hopes fell. What was he to do? In order to get across without losing his way, he must travel in a straight line. But how? Gigino looked across the sheet of water in deep thought.



"Can an ant swim?" he mused. "It must be done! I'll reach home or drown in the attempt."

He approached the water and was about to jump in, but held back. There in front of him lay a little boat with six oars. It seemed as if the boat were waiting for him. He did not stop to think twice. The boat lay a short distance from shore, but Gigino saw a way of lowering himself on to it without danger of drowning or even of getting wet. There was a blade of grass on the bank of the lake that

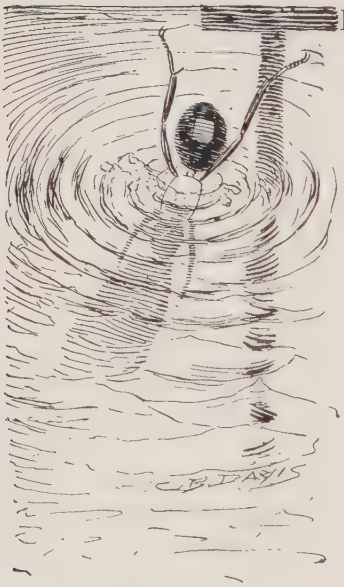
hung directly over the boat. Gigino climbed it and let himself drop upon a yellow spot that looked to him like a cushion.

"And now for the oars!" he shouted.

But the boat needed no orders. Moved as if by a magic power, the long oars stretched out, and, with a strong sweep, pushed the boat rapidly through the water toward the opposite shore.

CHAPTER XXV

THE TRIP ACROSS THE LAKE



THE long oars continued to move with steady, even strokes, and the boat glided gracefully and rapidly over the lake. As Gigino sailed, he saw many other boats of the same size and shape. They appeared and disappeared without giving the slightest sign of the power that drove them.

"Why, there is a great fleet on this lake!" said Gigino.

For a moment, he forgot the one thing he had started out to do. Returning to his dreams of greatness, he began to think of becoming a much-feared sea captain, of fighting great battles, in which, as a matter of course, it was always he who sank the enemy's ships.

With this idea in his head, Gigino began to walk up and down the deck, examining the boat with great care. Among other things he discovered a number of tubes.

"I understand. These are the speaking-tubes. Engineers and firemen, a-ttention!" he shouted.

A voice answered:

"Oh! Ho! Who is there?"

"It is I, Captain Gigino! All of you — up on deck!"

"Up? No! No! Down!"

And the boat plunged headlong into the lake, dragging Gigino down with it.

"Why, it's a submarine!" he thought, as he took hold of the tubes and held on as hard as he could.

Then, thinking that the journey under water would last a long time, — long enough to drown any ant, — he let go and struggled toward the surface. But he was very weak, and it was easy to see that he could not get to the top of the water. He was lost!

"Mamma!" he called out with his last breath.

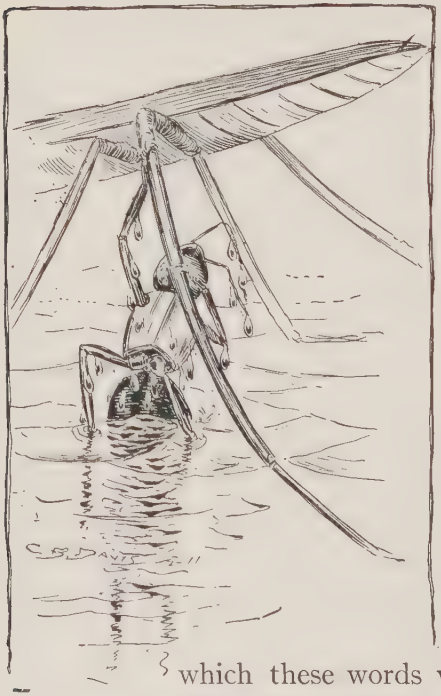
With that he felt better. He knew somehow that he would not drown, and, surely enough, at that moment a shadow passed above him. Out went his arms. He caught something and held on to it firmly.

"Oh, oh! Who's got hold of my leg?" some one shouted.

The voice put new life into our half-drowned hero.

"This is some one's leg," he thought. "Some one swimming calmly on the water. It is just what I want."

Drawing himself up hand over hand, he came out of the water and found himself upon the back of a strange little animal, who all the while kept shouting:



"Who is on my back? Who is on my back?"

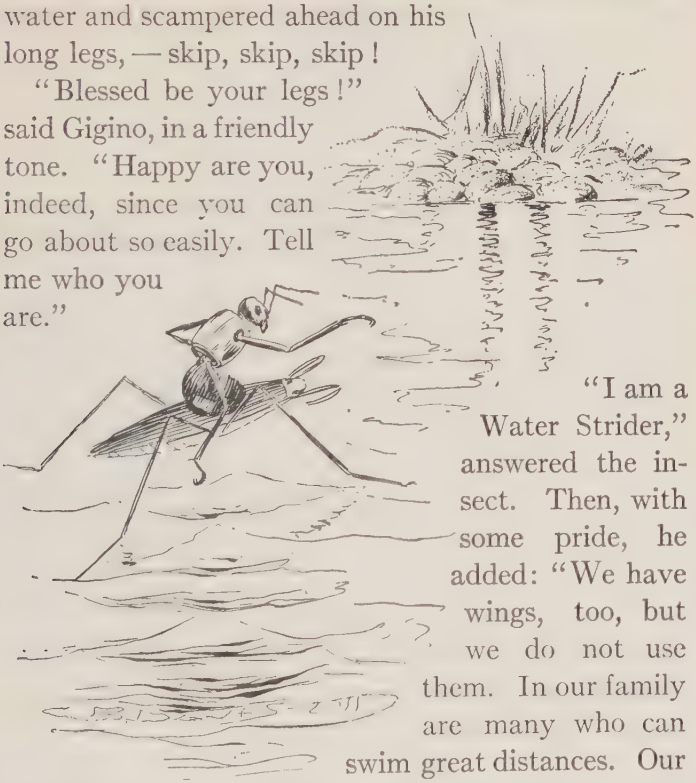
"It's I," answered Gigino. "That is to say, I am an ant armed with an excellent pair of jaws. Therefore I beg you to carry me to the bank yonder."

The tone in which these words were spoken made the insect feel that it would not be wise to answer. He kept on his way without another word.

In the meantime, Gigino looked closely at his water horse. He was a dark-colored insect with a

long, slender body. He straddled about on top of the water and scampered ahead on his long legs, — skip, skip, skip!

"Blessed be your legs!" said Gigino, in a friendly tone. "Happy are you, indeed, since you can go about so easily. Tell me who you are."



"I am a Water Strider," answered the insect. Then, with some pride, he added: "We have wings, too, but we do not use them. In our family are many who can swim great distances. Our Water Boatmen can fly beautifully."

Gigino at once saw that he had to deal with a creature of some importance, and felt that it was his duty to excuse himself for his former rudeness. In this way, there sprang up a friendship between horse and horseman. To pass away the time Gigino told

about his adventure with the enchanted ship that had dragged him under water.

The Strider thought for a while and then said:

"Ah! The Back Swimmer!"

"Is that the name of that strange boat?"

"Yes! It's the name of an insect of my family, — who lives, like ourselves, in puddles of water. But whereas we swim on the surface, he dives into the mud, where he feeds on other water-living insects. Often he comes to the surface to breathe, swimming on his back. The tubes that you got hold of he uses to breathe through."

"You don't tell me!" said Gigino.

"Yes," continued the Strider, "and you will be more surprised when I tell you that the Back Swimmer has a pair of wings much stronger than mine. With them he can fly through the air at great speed."

"A wonderful insect, indeed!" exclaimed Gigino.

But now the Water Strider had reached the bank, and Gigino landed.

"My dear Water Strider, you have done me a service that I shall never forget, if I live a thousand years. But if you see the Back Swimmer, tell him that was not the way to treat a traveler."

The Strider smiled, and turning about, set off from the shore. Gigino gazed after him a moment.

"What now?" he exclaimed, looking about him.

CHAPTER XXVI

WITH THE BUMBLEBEES

"WHAT now?"

Yes, indeed! What was the poor exile to do? He was alone, at night, lost in an unknown land. After his ducking in the lake, he did not know whether he was on the bank that he wanted to reach, or on the one that he wanted to leave behind.

"If only I could find shelter for the night!" he kept saying, as he searched about.

After a long time he discovered a hole in the side of a hill. He crawled into this quietly, feeling his way with his antennæ and holding his jaws in readiness in case of need. It was a winding tunnel, very large and very long. Having come to a turn in the tunnel, he heard a deep, familiar sound.

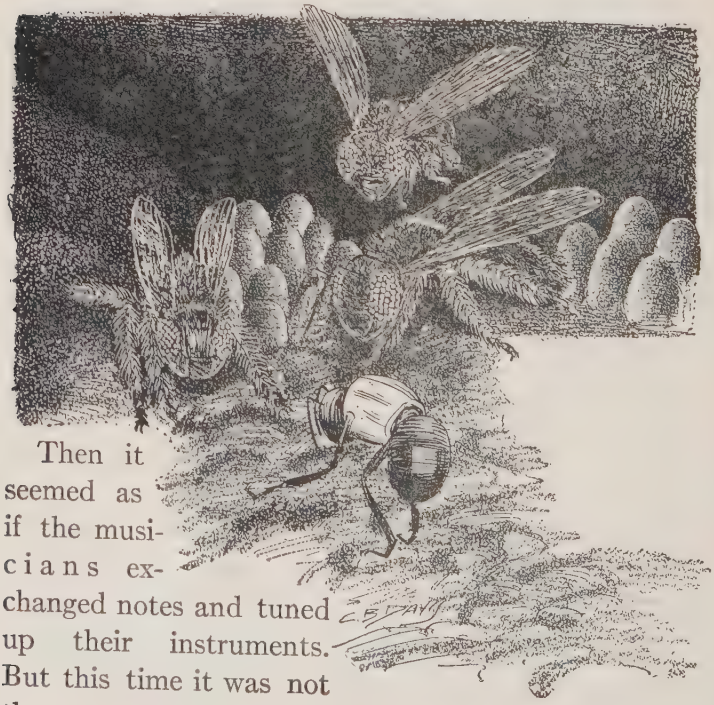
"A musician, without doubt!" he said to himself.

Soon more sounds were heard, one following another. In fact, there floated through the darkness a buzz-buzz-buzz of low notes.

"Why, it's a school of music!"

When the music stopped for a moment, Gigino could not help crying out:

"Hurrah! Well done! More! More!"



Then it seemed as if the musicians exchanged notes and tuned up their instruments. But this time it was not the same music.

"Who is there?" they called out.

Gigino came forward and spoke in a soft, sweet voice.

"I am a poor little wee bit of an insect that begs you very humbly for lodgings for the night."

"This way! This way!" buzzed some one.

Our exile stepped nearer, his antennæ stretched out. He met other antennæ that were busy feeling him over in order to get an idea of what and who he was. The examination seemed to be favorable to Gigino.

"Rest where you like," the same voice said. "The black house of the Bumblebee has never yet refused shelter to any one in need."

Gigino thanked him. Then, withdrawing to a corner, he stretched out his tired limbs with a great sense of comfort, and lay there weary, but contented.

All night long he listened to the music. You can imagine, then, with what curiosity he waited for the morning, when he would get a chance to see how the musicians looked. When the day broke, a ray of light entered the room. Gigino saw that he was in a wax house under the ground. The house was full of big bumblebees. They were all black, hairy insects with yellow stripes.

To Gigino they looked like bears. But they were mild-mannered insects, busy from morning till

night sucking nectar from flowers and bringing it home to their children.

Gigino had to confess that these insects were not clever. They chose any forgotten spot and built their home in that. But their house was as clean as could be. Every one worked, the males, the females, and the workers alike. They were all kind and peaceful, and in a short time Gigino became friends with them.

While he was expressing his thanks for the kind welcome he had received, there came to the door of the dwelling a poor little yellow-striped bee, who was in great distress.

"Have pity on a poor Mason bee!" she cried.

The Mason bee began a sad story. For two days she had worked to build herself a nest on the outer wall of a white house. Then a Robber bee had come along, and, after a terrible fight, had driven the rightful owner out. Therefore she had come to throw herself upon the kindness of the Bumblebee. The good Bumblebee gave the Mason plenty to eat. After dinner, having thanked her hosts, the stranger was about to leave, when Gigino, upon whom the story of the Mason bee had made a great impression, stopped her.

"Pardon me a second," he said. "You have been treated badly. Can I be of any help to you Where is the nest that was taken from you?"

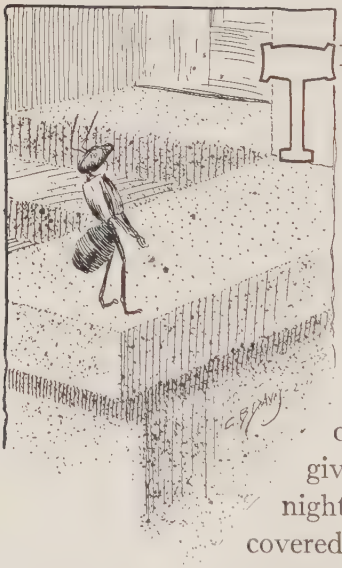
The Mason bee shook her head.

"I, with all my strength," she said, "was not able to protect my home, and I have but little hope that you, my dear ant, can do anything for me. However, my nest is on the front wall of a white house covered with a grapevine. It lies in that direction."

Without more ado, the Mason bee flew away.

CHAPTER XXVII

HOME



THE house where the Mason bee had made her nest must be Gigino's home! He was in a great hurry to be gone.

"I am going away," said Gigino to the Bumblebees. "I shall always remember you. Your goodness to me has been of great value. You have given me shelter for the night. Through you I have discovered the way to my own house. Farewell, my kind, kind friends."

Full of courage and hope, our ant took the road pointed out by the bee. Onward he went, without ever stopping to rest. It was a good road, and, after a day's hurried walking, Gigino found himself at last at the steps of his house. It was his home. indeed!

I cannot say with what feelings Gigino climbed the steps down which he had come with the Latin grammar, on that day so very long ago.

What had happened to Maurice and Georgina!

This question he could not answer. Soon he might learn something about them. First of all, however, he must keep the promise given to the Mason bee, who had been of such great service to him.

Crawling up the closed door of the house, he began to wander over the front wall. Near the roof, he saw a nest that might be the one he wanted. It was made of yellow dirt and stood out from the wall. Gigino saw a winged insect entering it in a great hurry, and holding a poor little butterfly close to her breast.

Putting his head in the doorway, he called:

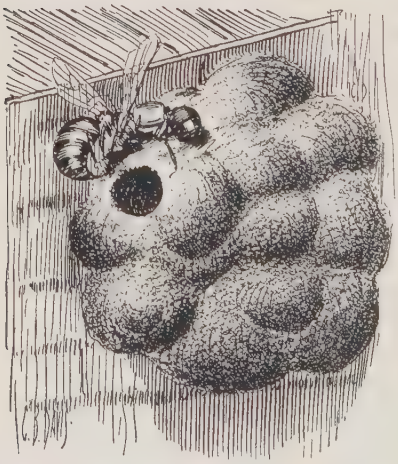
"Who is at home?"

There was a shout of angry voices and a crowd of mad bees rushed out upon him. Gigino had barely enough time to draw to one side. The bees were blind with rage, and would, to be sure, have stung our young friend to death if he had not gotten out of their way. On he ran. Now and then he turned to see them go in and out of the house, buzzing, buzzing, buzzing.

The nest to which Gigino had come was indeed that of a Mason bee. But it was not the one he wanted! No, he knew enough for that!

A little farther on, he saw a nest that appeared to be nothing more than a handful of mud stuck to the wall. Examining it at close range and keeping in mind the description that the Mason bee had given him, he saw that it was the very place he was looking for.

Soon he found the entrance. Armed with patience and with a strong pair of jaws, he placed himself beside it and waited. The sun had already set, but Gigino, true to his word, kept his post. Suddenly there was a buzzing, and it was not long before the Robber showed herself at the entrance of the stolen home.



Gigino pounced upon her. He seized her head in his jaws, and wound his legs about her wings and body. When he had the Robber in his power, he said in a joking way:

"I beg your pardon, but you see I have come to collect my rent."

The bee tried to defend herself by using her needle. Gigino cut the needle in two.

"I am sorry," he said, "but what can you expect?"

Having in this way deprived the bee of her power to do harm, he let her go.

"Hurry out of here and do not show yourself in this place any more. You ought to be happy that I am satisfied without taking your life. Now, go!" shouted Gigino.

The Robber bee did not wait to be told twice, but flew away at once.

Just then there was a glad cry.

"My dear ant, let me embrace you."

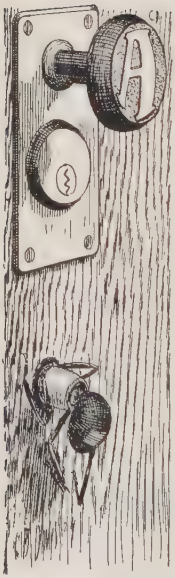
It was the Mason bee, the rightful owner of the nest. After she had left the Bumblebees, she had come to the white house to build herself another home. Attracted by the cries, she came to her old nest, and saw how Gigino had driven out her enemy.

"See, I have been able to keep my promise!" said Gigino. "Go into your house, honest Mason, and be not afraid. Your enemy will never again disturb you."

Then he came down the wall to the door of his house, feeling happy because he had done an act of kindness.

CHAPTER XXVIII

GIGINO GETS INTO HIS HOUSE



"AH! At last!" murmured Gigino. "Now I can say that I am in my own home."

You may already have seen that our friend had the fault of thinking that the carrying out of his plans was an easy matter. But he was not long in discovering that to enter his home was no light task. The door was fitted so tightly that, search as he might, he could not find a single hole through which to crawl.

"There is no use in trying the windows," he said, "for they, too, will be locked at this time of the night. Without doubt my people are all in bed."

Gigino was worried. He ran about, not knowing what to do. Then the moon came out, and he saw a hole in the door that he had not been able to find before.

"I'll try that," he said. "I may get in, after all."

The hole was a little narrow, but, by using his jaws, he managed to make it large enough to squeeze himself into. As he walked, the hole became larger and more comfortable. It was a dark, winding tunnel, now rising and now falling, and full of sawdust, made, evidently, by the tenant of the place.

"I wonder," thought Gigino, "who it can be that amuses himself by boring through the door of my house."

And on he walked, feeling his way as he went. Soon he came to a soft object that stopped his progress. At the same moment, he heard a voice in the darkness saying:

"Who is scratching my back?"

Strange as it seems, Gigino made a wise guess.

"This gentleman has a soft back, but he must have a very hard head to be able to go through a house door. It is better, then, to come to a peaceful understanding before he turns around."

Therefore, seizing the soft, weak body with his forelegs, he said:

"I beg your pardon for disturbing you."

"Let me alone; you're killing me!"

"Perhaps . . . but . . . I should be extremely sorry to do that."

"Let me at least turn round."

"Don't be foolish. It's just as easy to talk to each other as we are. Don't disturb yourself. Make yourself at home."

"But who are you? What do you want?"

"Very well, dear sir. I am a tiny, wee ant, but, as you see, I am in a position to cut your body in two with one bite."

"Please don't do that."

"Have no fear. What I want to know from you, very dear sir, is this — should I let you alone, may I trust that you will not use your arms against me?"

"I promise."

"On the word of an honest insect?"

"I swear to you by the Order of the Wood-Eaters, to which I belong."

"Do you?" exclaimed Gigino, in surprise. "Well, well! After all we are related and we may treat each other as brothers."

The strange insect, feeling himself free, turned right about, so that Gigino saw, standing before him, a strong head, armed with a sharp pair of sawlike jaws.

"Now you see," said the owner of the head, "I could easily kill you, but I have given my word of honor; and, besides, this is a very important moment

of my life and I do not want to lose any time. Tell me why you came into my house."

"Why, I got into your house in order that I may get into mine. In a word, I want to get on the other side of this door."

"At present, it is impossible. This is the end of the passage."

"And can't you, strong as you are, manage to make a hole clear through?"

"I shall have to do so or die. Let us hope that all goes well."

These words aroused all Gigino's curiosity.

"Be kind enough to explain," he said. "I do not understand."

The other kept silence for a second or two, and then he began:

"I am a Horn Tail. My name is Cephus. I feel that the time is fast coming when I must change my form. I feel that in a short time I shall become a large, beautiful insect,—an insect of great strength and with the power to fly. I have lived in this wood for more than a year. Ever since I was born I have bored and bored through this wood. As I worked on, I grew larger and my home had to grow larger with me. Now, after so much work, I am to be free. I shall come forth a new being. But to reach the air, I shall have to keep on working, working till the end. I cannot turn back now. The pas-

sage which I bored while I was small is too narrow for my body. You see, therefore, that I was right in saying I am at the most important step of my life."

Gigino could not hide a feeling of real admiration for the brave miner. But wishing to give himself the air of an insect who had traveled far and seen much, he said:

"Let me tell you that I have seen miners stronger than yourself. Why, I have a friend that bored through a nutgall harder than a cherry pit."

The Horn Tail laughed a little at this, and, turning about, started to work anew. The wood cut by the powerful jaws of the insect fell down in a rain of sawdust, and the passage rapidly became longer and wider. But soon the work stopped and Gigino thought he heard a murmur.

"After all, it would be a shame!"

Then the boring began again with more zeal than ever. Suddenly a cry echoed through the hall.

"Poor me! I am lost!"

Gigino pushed forward. Poor Cephus was frantic and kept talking to himself.

"What's happened?" asked Gigino.

The other pointed with his head.

"What's happened? Here is some new kind of wood to bore through."

Gigino felt the wall that shut up the passage and cried:

"Goodness! It's the lock."

CHAPTER XXIX

GIGINO BITES THE SERVANT

SUCH was, indeed, the case. Poor Cephus! He had worked so hard, and now that the time had come when he was to change into a beautiful, winged creature, he had run against a sheet of iron.

"And now?" said Gigino, anxiously.

The Horn Tail shook himself, saying:

"Cheer up. Let's get to work again; I am afraid I have no time to lose."

"Are you going to turn back?"

"Turn back! Not for the world! I am going right through the iron."

Gigino gazed in surprise, and his surprise was greater when he heard the sharp noise of a saw drawn with rapid and regular movement over the iron. At last the hole was made.

"Goodness me!" shouted Gigino. "Talk about wooden balls! This is wonderful!"

"Well," replied Cephus, "you understand that

it is a matter of life or death to me. I couldn't bear to die in this dark hole just at the moment when I was going to taste the freedom of the air."

"And now you are about to change shape?"

"Yes, and I have need of silence, for in a moment I shall be a chrysalis. But you wanted to get by. Here's a clear road."

"Thank you ever so much," said Gigino. "Thanks from the bottom of my heart, and if I may in any way be useful to you . . ."

"At present I need nothing but rest. Pass on."

Gigino passed through the hole in the lock, and descended the door into the vestibule of his home. No sooner had our friend reached the floor, than he began to dance about.

"Hurrah!" he exclaimed. "I'm in my house! I am near my mother!"

In his great desire to see her again, Gigino began to grope about in search of the door, and ran plump into a fig. Without much ado, he sat down at the table, so to speak, and between bites talked pleasantly to himself.

"I always said so. The figs we grow in our orchard are a delight. But to know how tasty they really are, one has to be a hungry little ant!"

For a long time Gigino feasted on the fig, for it was a whole day since he had eaten anything. Finally a ray of light came in at the window. It was dawn.

Soon there was the sound of footsteps. It was Eliza, the maid, coming, as usual, to open the windows. At the same time, Gigino heard a strange noise, followed immediately by a cry of fear.

What had happened?

It is easily told. From a hole bored in the door-lock, there had entered a splendid winged insect. At the unexpected sight, Eliza screamed with fright, seized her apron, and began chasing the insect about the room, while the poor thing looked here and there for means of escape.

Gigino, who recognized the Horn Tail, heard him say:

"My dear ant, if you are here, help me!"

Our friend did not wait for a second call, but climbed up over the maid's slipper. Having reached her ankle at the very moment that Eliza caught the poor insect, he opened his jaws and then tightened them again with all the strength that he had. The maid gave a cry and dropped her apron, and Cephus, feeling himself free, flew to the open window.

"Many thanks, my dear ant!" he called back.

CHAPTER XXX

GIGINO AGAIN COMPLAINS OF THE PROFESSOR

GIGINO had good reason to be happy. He had paid his debt to the Horn Tail, and once again he felt the joy of having done a good deed. He had also found his home. Yet, if the truth must be told, he lived in great fear, — the fear of people's feet; and when he began to hear the sound of footsteps throughout the house, he trembled! Suppose some one were to step upon him! What then? Swiftly, very swiftly, he ran up the nearest wall.

"If man could only understand the beauty of life that is in little folks like myself," he murmured, "he would not so willingly crush us to death."

Meanwhile he made his way to a hatrack, and perched himself on the rim of a large hat.

"Here I get a clear view of the dining room," he said. "When they come to breakfast, I can see them all and hear what they say."

A few minutes later, in came Uncle Tom. Gigino was excited, but his excitement became greater when he heard Uncle Tom say:

"Hurry, Eliza, brush my hat. I have to go to town at once."

Gigino shivered. Down came the hat. He trembled and shook with every sweep of the brush. At any moment he might be hurled who knows where, along with the dust. But, fortunately for him, housemaids are not any too careful when it comes to brushing their master's hats, and so Gigino and the dust remained on the rim. He was saved! But at what cost! Here he was, on the rim of a hat, a slave to the whims of Uncle Tom! Uncle Tom was going out, and Gigino had to go along, too.

"Well, anyhow," he said to himself, "if Uncle Tom takes me out with him, he will have to bring me back, also."

It was a long time since Gigino had thought of the professor of Latin. He was, nevertheless, to return on the scene, and again make Gigino's life bitter. Not very far from the house, Gigino, who was by this time gayly walking around the rim of the hat without the least thought of danger, was suddenly thrown to the ground. With a great flourish, and

without even dreaming that he was hurling his little nephew through the air, Uncle Tom had raised his hat to the Latin professor, who was passing by.

Poor Gigino — he could hardly raise his head!

"Ha! that Latin professor!" he exclaimed. "If I meet my friend Cephus again, I'm going to have him bore a hole through the professor's head."

Gigino was desperate. He had undergone so many hardships to reach home! And now, by accident, to be hurled into an unknown place and lost! This was, indeed, too much!

He lay there, stunned and helpless. What was to become of him?

Then he heard voices near him.

"I never saw an insect without wings make so fine a leap! If one of us had fallen from such a height, she could not have gotten up so easily!"

They were, in truth, strange creatures who talked in this way about the mishap that had overtaken our friend. Ants they certainly were, but how different! Gigino had never dreamed that there were such ants. They were surely very beautiful, with their large yellow bodies.

"Where do you come from?" asked Gigino, as he looked closely at them with his three simple eyes.

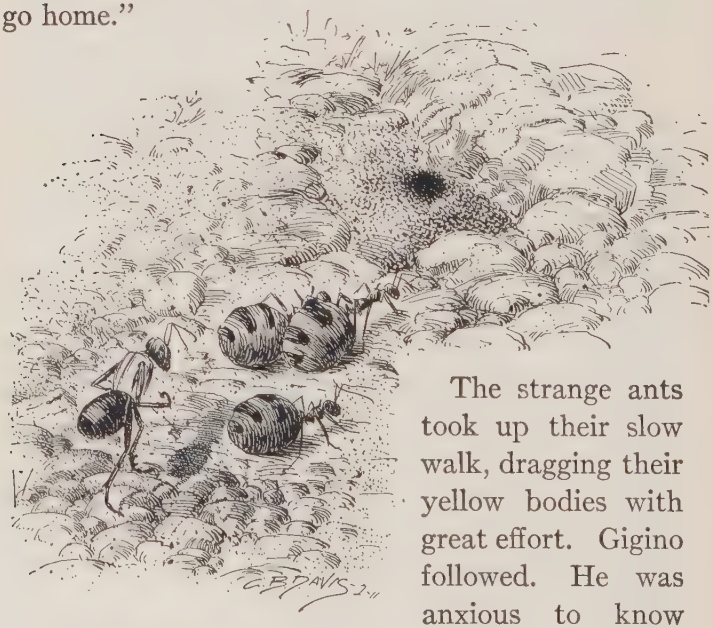
"Although you come from a great height, we come from a greater distance than you," answered one of them.

"Indeed! And where is that?"

"From Mexico!"

Gigino thought the ant was joking, and was about to tell her a few things, when another one of them exclaimed:

"Come. It is daylight now. It is better that we go home."



The strange ants took up their slow walk, dragging their yellow bodies with great effort. Gigino followed. He was anxious to know more about these creatures. As he was lost, he might just as well spend the time in this way as in any other.

Very slowly the group of yellow ants climbed a slope, at the top of which there rose a little mound of

sand. This was their home. Before it there were three ants — yellow sentinels they were!

"Welcome home!" they cried to their tired companions. Then, spying Gigino coming along behind the rest, they exclaimed in rather angry tones:

"Who is that stranger? What does he want?"

Gigino came forward, and respectfully saluted the sentinel.

"I beg you, if it does not displease you," he said, "to include me among you, without making distinctions of color. Do not mistrust me. I am a poor, lonely ant, exiled from my home because of a terrible war. My only desire is to know who you are, where you come from, and how you live."

This little speech was liked very much by the sentinels. After holding a brief council, they decided to allow Gigino to visit their nest, accompanied by one of their number. Gigino, therefore, went down a funnel-like opening into the first floor of the ant house. He praised their village as he hurried through from place to place. In the lower part of the ant home he saw a wonderful thing.

"This is a dream!" he cried.

"A dream!" replied the guide. "Not at all. They are jars full of real honey."

Clinging to the walls of the room were several ants. Each of them held a large yellow bag full of honey.

"Jars of honey?" asked Gigino.

"Even so," answered the guide. "I can under-

stand your surprise, since the ants in this country have no idea of our life. We are Mexican ants, and

happen to be here purely through accident. A long time ago, in one of those ugly things in which men cross the seas (Gigino understood—a steamer!), there were stored away some Mexican plants. In their stems and in the earth in which the roots were wrapped, there were carried a number of insects. Among these insects there were some members of our family. After much traveling, they found a home in this village."

"Ah!" exclaimed Gigino. "Were those ants on a Mexican oak, perhaps?"

"Precisely!"

Our hero remembered that years before, Uncle Tom had a number of plants brought from Mexico, among them an oak sapling. This was, indeed, a happy thing to remember. It renewed all his hopes, since the presence of these ants was a sure sign that he was not far away from his home.

"The Mexican oak," continued the guide, "is our food. Those ants you met on the way go at night to suck the delicious galls that form on the twigs. It is the duty of the ants you see here to cling to walls and ceiling and to receive the honey brought in by

the workers. These ants become living jars of real honey."

"And do they stay there forever?"

"Yes, they cannot move any more, and they have no other duty than to preserve food for those of us who work. It must be said, however, that they choose this heavy burden of their own free will."

Gigino was dazed. He could hardly believe his ears and eyes. Was it possible that there were ants who gave up their lives so that their bodies might be as storehouses for their companions!

"Do you want to taste some of our honey?" the guide asked Gigino.

He did not wait to be asked twice. He accepted with pleasure the honey offered him. It was delicious, even if a little bitter.

"What wonders nature does!" exclaimed Gigino, as he climbed out of the ant house.

Having come to the door of the village, he was in the act of thanking his guide, when there was a cry:

"Flicker! Flicker!"

At the same time Gigino felt himself taken up and carried away, along with the three Mexican ants.

CHAPTER XXXI

IN A ROSEBUD

WE must agree to one thing. Even though Gigino had failed to become the Emperor of all the ants, it must not be supposed that he lacked intelligence and strength. Not at all!

Finding himself shut tight in the mouth of that terrible bird, the terror of all ants, his mind immediately started to work. He twisted himself in his hempseed coat in such a way that the bird, feeling a hempseed on his tongue, hastened to spit it out, without in the least suspecting that it contained an ant. *If — if — if — if — if — if — if*, cried the Flicker, and away he flew. Gigino fell to the ground. This time he blessed his fall.

Where was he? He knew that he could not be very far from the village of the Mexican ants. He

knew that they did not dwell far away from the oak that supplied them with food, and he knew that the oak was near his house. But in spite of all this, he did not know what road he should take to get to his home.

Walking hither and thither, he finally came to a wild rosebush. He climbed it, hoping from the high position to be able to get an idea of where he was. Up and up he climbed. Soon he arrived at the highest rose on the bush, where he stopped, overcome by the sweet fragrance.

"What a delicious odor!"

And then he noticed that something very interesting was taking place inside the rose. A magnificent bee was working away with great zeal. As she sucked the sweetness of the flower, she sang a merry song.

Z . . . n, Z . . . n, kisses I bring.
Dear flower, there's love for thee.
Z . . . n, Z . . . n, thy honey's for me!
I fly, fly on the wings of the wind,
Kisses and love I bring.
O give thy honey to me!

"Splendid!" thought Gigino. "But it is not the song I learned at school. Let's see — how did that go?"

Biz . . . Biz . . . Biz,
This is the song of the bee,
His legs are of yellow,

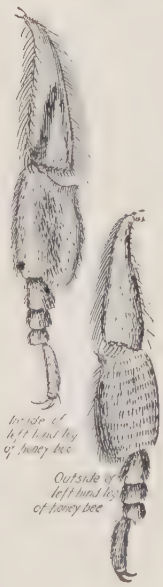
A jolly good fellow,
And yet a great worker is he.

On days that are sunny
He makes fragrant honey,
On days that — that —

"What next? I have forgotten. If Georgina were only here! She knows all the poems we ever learned. But where, when, how shall I find her?"

At once Gigino became sad, but the bee went on with her song and her work.

And as she sang, the rose seemed to quiver with tenderness and to present its petals to the busy golden insect. When the bee had taken a fair supply of the rose's honey, she climbed out, and, stopping on the top of the flower, began to apply herself with the greatest care to a work that filled Gigino with admiration.



With her two front legs, she quickly removed the pollen grains collected on her hairy body. Then she passed the pollen to her two middle legs, and from these to her hind legs. These were wonderful legs. They were very hairy and well fitted to carry all the pollen collected by the graceful crea-

ture. Gigino could not help expressing his admiration.

"Do you know, Mrs. Bee," he said, "that you are very beautiful?"

The bee turned sharply and, seeing Gigino, exclaimed angrily:

"What are you doing here?"

Gigino was hurt. Leaving compliments alone, he answered dryly:

"I do what I please. And you?"

"I do something more," answered the bee. "I do my duty. And it surprises me greatly that an ant dares to get on a flower that belongs especially to us."

At these words, Gigino could no longer keep calm.

"Your flowers! Who can prevent us from smelling these roses? Your flowers! Indeed! I am doing nobody harm. But what are you doing? You are robbing this beautiful rose of its honey!"

During this outburst the bee had drawn out her sting, but she thought best not to give way to her anger.

"I have never met with a more stupid ant in all my life."

But before our friend had time to answer, the bee added:

"It's useless to discuss the point. I'll prove it to you in a moment. Do you really know what a flower is? Are you acquainted with its life? Do you

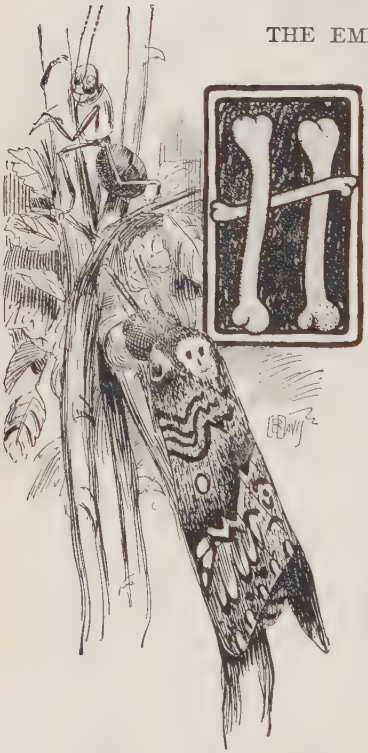
know that it breathes, sleeps, suffers, loves, and lives as we do? There you stand, more stupid than ever. You do not know, that as you have had parents, so do flowers have mothers and fathers, and that these mother flowers and father flowers love each other! But flowers always stay in one place. They love each other and wish to tell each other many tender things. But they cannot! Who brings them loving thoughts and sweet messages? It is we, the bees! We know all their secrets, and they, in return for our services, open their petals to us and give us their honey!"

Then the bee began to sing and the flower seemed to hear:

Z . . . n, Z . . . n, kisses I bring.
Dear flower, there's love for thee.
Z . . . n, Z . . . n, thy honey's for me!
I fly, fly on the wings of the wind,
Kisses and love I bring.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE EMPEROR STONED



"HOW many beautiful things you have told me!" said Gigino, after a long pause. "But tell me, before I leave this rosebush, how you get the honey and the wax."

"That is an easy matter. With my tongue I suck the nectar of the flower. This nectar passes through my body and is made into honey. Some of it, however, undergoes a different change and comes out over my body as wax. With this wax we make the honeycomb."

"Another question," added Gigino.

"All right, but hurry. It's almost sunset and I have to get to my hive."

"What's that?"

"Don't you even know that? The hive is our village."

"I want to know your name."

"My name is Honeybee."

Then the bee took to flight, singing as she flew:

Z . . . n, Z . . . n, honey I bring,
Dear Queen, here's honey for thee.
Z . . . n, Z . . . n, thy love's for me!
I fly, fly on the wings of the wind,
Honey, sweet honey I bring!

Gigino followed her with his eye until he saw her alight on a tree only a short distance away. But he had not been the only one who had followed Honeybee home with his eye. From a stem on the rosebush he heard a shrill voice.

"Ah — ah, my dear Bee! Now I know where your house is, and to-night I shall come and taste your honey."

Gigino was stunned. Attached to a twig of the rosebush was a large black monster with a yellow skull on its brown and hairy back. Gigino was frightened and listened in terror to its words.

"Very well. No sooner will night come, than I shall sweeten my mouth at your table, — as surely as my name is Atropos."

It was indeed an Atropos, one of the large black

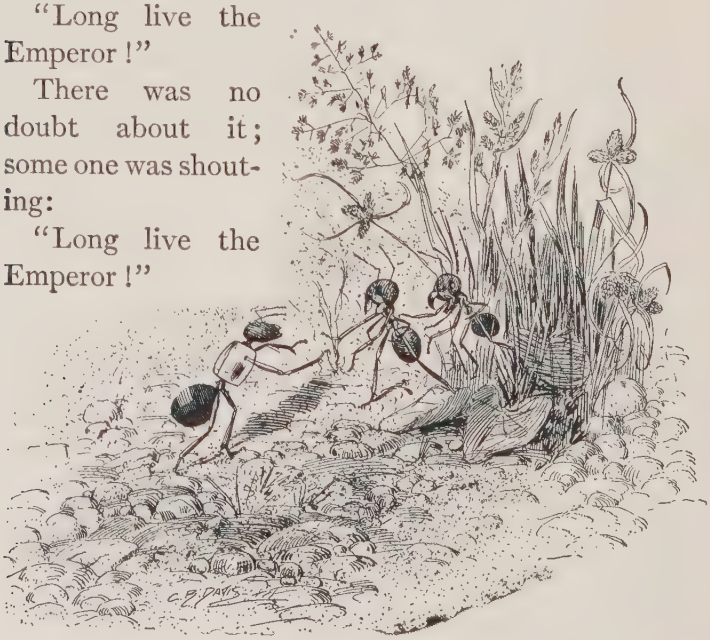
butterflies that are generally called Skulls, because of the ghastly yellow design on their backs.

Gigino immediately became aware that he had to deal with a dangerous foe, and since he felt a great liking for the Honeybee, he determined to warn her of the wicked intentions of the Black Skull. With this purpose in mind, he descended the rosebush, and having reached the ground, he hurried with all the speed he could muster in the direction of the bee's hive. Suddenly he stopped in amazement. Surely he heard some one cry:

"Long live the Emperor!"

There was no doubt about it; some one was shouting:

"Long live the Emperor!"



Gigino was almost faint with joy! From a forest of grass at his right, there came forward two eager forms.

"White Patch!"

"Big-Head! Big-Tongs!"

And the three ants threw themselves into each other's arms.

"The Emperor himself!" Big-Tongs was crying. "Who would have believed it!"

"And we thought that he was dead!" added Big-Head.

"Thank you for your kind thoughts," replied Gigino. "But how did you manage to escape?"

"Ah! We were saved by a miracle. We escaped, — we don't know how, for more than twenty Reds were upon us. What a battle!"

"How fortunate!" added Gigino. "You cannot imagine how happy I am to see you again."

"And we! We mean to stay with you until we die!"

Gigino was moved.

"Then," said he, "come with me. I have work of great importance on hand. You may tell me your story as we move along."

And the three took the road to the beehive.

"Just think . . ." Big-Head and Big-Tongs began.

"One at a time." said Gigino. "Big-Tongs may talk first."

"Well!" went on Big-Tongs, "all in all, I have had a pretty hard time of it. Often I have been without a roof over my head. Even now I am starving, for I have not had a bite to eat since morning. But now that I have found you once more, I am afraid of nothing. Isn't that so, Big-Head?"

"Yes, indeed!"

And then, without a moment's warning, a shower of stones fell about them. The three ants did not know what had happened. The ground seemed to be slipping from under their feet. They staggered with fear as they grasped at the friendly grass blades for support. It was the work of a second. When they had gathered strength enough to look about, a terrible picture presented itself to their eyes. They were on the edge of a sand pit. At the bottom, Big-Head was struggling with a frightful monster that was feasting on the unhappy ant and every now and then exclaiming:

"Ah! Ah! How excellent!"

"It's the Ant Lion," muttered Big-Tongs, in terror.

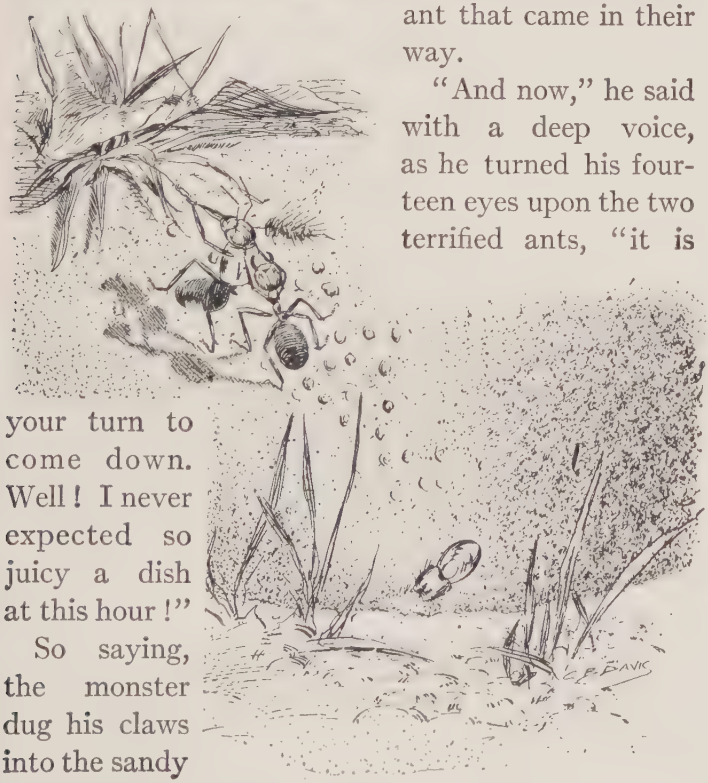
"The Ant Lion!" repeated Gigino, suddenly remembering his adventure with a creature of that name. "Ah! Now I understand. This is the hungry larva. Now I see why my traveling companion hoped that her children would meet ants as good as I."

As if in answer to these thoughts, the monster, after

having eaten all of Big-Head that he wanted, exclaimed with satisfaction:

"Delicious!"

It was only then that Gigino had a chance to observe the monster in all his horror. His black mouth was wide open. His eyes glared, and his terrible pincer-like jaws were ready to seize the first ant that came in their way.



"And now," he said with a deep voice, as he turned his fourteen eyes upon the two terrified ants, "it is your turn to come down. Well! I never expected so juicy a dish at this hour!"

So saying, the monster dug his claws into the sandy

earth, loaded his head with pebbles, and with great force and skill hurled another storm of stones down upon the frightened pair. Gigino, feeling himself dragged down by the shifting sand, clung with all his might to the blade of grass that had held him up till now, and thus he succeeded in keeping himself out of reach. All this while Big-Tongs hung on to his dear emperor's back. In this way the two ants were saved.

"Ah!" cried Big-Tongs. "I owe you my life!"

"And I," added Gigino, "owe you a wrenched back. But that doesn't matter. Look there! Big-Head is worse off than I."

"Poor fellow!" exclaimed Big-Tongs, with great feeling. "He is reduced to a mere shell. The brute has sucked him dry."

"Come, let's go," cried Gigino. "We have had enough of this Ant Lion."

CHAPTER XXXIII

BIG-TONGS EARNS A TITLE

NATURALLY Gigino had lost a great deal of time, so that when he arrived at the bee's village it was already dark.

"I'm afraid we are late," murmured the Emperor.

"But where are we going?" Big-Tongs ventured to ask.

"We're going to save a bee village, threatened by a big black highwayman."

"Capital! We will then be able to get some honey."

"Away with that thought," Gigino answered. "This is a glorious expedition with a noble aim, and you seem to think of nothing but eating."

"True, but my stomach is empty."

By this time the two ants had reached the hive. A number of bees were running in and out, acting as if they were in great distress.

"The Skull! The Skull!" they shrieked.

Evidently the village had been taken by surprise. Gigino, followed by his comrade, pushed inside and was soon upon the scene of battle. The Skull had invaded the hive. There he was, with his big, ugly body. The bees attempted to pierce the monster with their stings, but without success. Above the confusion all sorts of cries arose.

"The village will be destroyed!"

"Our young ones are lost!"

"Our Queen will be killed!"

At this point Gigino turned to Big-Tongs.

"Do you understand? A queen is in danger. We must save her at all costs."

"But how, if the bees, with their stings, can do nothing?"

"Foolish one, where needles fail, tongs succeed!"

The Skull, notwithstanding the stings of that swarm of bees, continued to gorge himself with honey. Suddenly there was a shriek.

"Oh, my leg!"

This was at once followed by a louder cry.

"Who's cutting my antennæ?"

At the same time, Gigino sat erect on the monster's head.

"Big-Tongs, leave not one leg to his body!"

The Skull, at that unexpected attack, tried to save himself. But the two ants were busy. First a leg, then a wing came off, and finally the huge body fell to the floor and lay still. A cry of victory echoed throughout the hive.

Then a voice was heard rising above all the others:

"Who has overcome this monster?"

Gigino recognized the voice.

"Is that you, Honeybee?" he cried.

"Ah!" replied the bee, climbing up the Skull's back. "The ant I met on the rosebush! How did you get here?"

"I was aware of the intention of this villain, and I came here to save your village."

"Thanks!" cried Honeybee. "Fellow-bees, salute this hero. To him we owe our safety."

A loud hurrah was the answer.

Gigino, wishing his friend to share in the praise, cried out at the top of his voice:

"Hold awhile. Big-Tongs! Big-Tongs!"

But Big-Tongs did not answer.

"Ha, ha!" said Gigino, "he must have buried himself in a mess of honey."

Meanwhile Honeybee, in that same tender voice

she used when speaking to the rosebud, said to him:

"You must stay here with us. It is too late to go home now."

"Much too late, especially since I have no home," answered Gigino.

Honeybee was surprised at this, but she quickly put a check to her curiosity.

"I shall be very much pleased," she said, "to hear your history. But you will tell it to me to-morrow. I take it for granted that you and your friend will stay with us. Now I must help my sisters in ridding the house of this monster."

After Gigino had come down from the Skull's back, Honeybee joined the other bees in trying to lift the monster's body. But its weight and its size were too much for them.

"Listen," some one suggested. "To throw this monster out of the hive is impossible. I propose that we cast the body to one side, if we can manage it, and cover it with wax."

The idea was a good one. All the bees went to one side, and, redoubling their efforts, rolled the body over.

No sooner had it been moved, than an ant crawled weakly from under it.

"Ah," he cried, "had you delayed but another second, I should have been smothered to death under this huge weight!"

It was Big-Tongs, who had been caught under the Skull's body, after having cut off the last leg.

Gigino raised him up on his feet.

"Big-Tongs, you are a brave soldier," he said. "You have done your duty, and, as reward, in the presence of this noble host, I create you Commander in Chief of All the Ants."

Big-Tongs did not understand all the importance of this honor, but he knew that the Emperor had given him a high rank among insects, and he murmured his thanks.

CHAPTER XXXIV

IN THE KINGDOM OF THE BEES

NEXT morning, Gigino, to whom the bees had assigned a most beautiful room in which to rest for the night, awoke in bad humor. "That terrible Skull," he murmured. "I dreamed about it all night. Big-Tongs! Big-Tongs, I say! Big To-o-o-o-ngs!"

The General, who was sleeping soundly, stirred.

"At last!" exclaimed Gigino. "Is this how you sleep? Remember, a soldier must always sleep with one eye open!"

"I'm hungry."

"You're never satisfied, my friend. Last night, at the supper the bees gave us, you ate enough for four. You must correct this fault. Remember also that this morning we are to visit the bee's palace. We shall be introduced to the Queen. To the Queen, do you understand? Keep your place . . . remember!"

The idea of being presented to the Queen was enough to put Gigino in good spirits. He was about to give Big-Tongs the rules of behavior to be followed on this occasion, when a voice from without asked:

"My dear lady, may I come in?"

It was Honeybee.

"My dear lady!" said Gigino. "First of all, it is very important that I explain to you that I am not a lady."

"What!"

"No. For the simple reason that I belong to the masculine gender, singular number! I am a man!"

"And this other ant?"

"Is just like me. Both of us together belong to the masculine gender, plural number. We are men!"

"I thought you were neuters, like myself. I thought you were workers!"

Gigino burst out laughing.

"Workers! What do you say to that, Big-Tongs? She thought we two were workers. She has no idea who we are. It is time that I was made known to her. Big-Tongs, present me."

Big-Tongs bowed, and pointed to Gigino.

"White Patch, Emperor of the Ants!" he said.

Gigino, in his turn, pointed to Big-Tongs, and bowed to the bee.

"Big-Tongs, my General in Chief!"

Honeybee was astonished.

"But, my dear ant," she said, "I understand very little about what you say. I am a worker and must needs go on about my business. If you want to visit our home, you must hasten."

Gigino, who was a little taken back by these words, turned toward Big-Tongs.

"Come! Be quick! Do you hear? We have to visit the palace!"

Thus saying, he marched straight out of the room, followed by Honeybee and Big-Tongs. The three visited the hive.

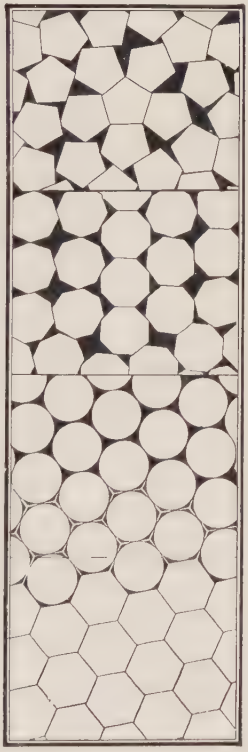
It was a large city, built according to the best plans, clean and comfortable. The houses were six-sided, all alike and arranged in regular order.

"You understand very well," said Honeybee, "that the hexagon is the only form that permits us to fill a given space with the greatest number of cells. Any other shape would mean a greater loss of space."

"And how do you manage to build these cells?"

"This is how. As soon as we have selected a place for our settlement, whether in the crack of a wall or in the hollow of an old tree, such as this is, we begin by

spreading our wax all over the inside wall. The wall is soon covered with a thick layer of wax. In this wall our most skillful builders construct cells. Come, you shall see how these are made."



Honeybee led the visitors to a place where new cells were being built. In the mass of wax, a number of bees were forming small, six-sided cells. As soon as they had roughly shaped the cells, they gave way to more clever bees, who, by dint of measuring, planing, and polishing, made the cells into beautiful rooms.

"How quick they are!" exclaimed Big-Tongs, in wonder.

"Why," said Honeybee, "in a night and a day we can make as many as four thousand cells!"

"This is all very well," said Gigino, "but I have one thing to say. You will excuse me, I hope. These cells are very well made, but they are not the same size as the others."

"Of course not," said Honeybee. "These cells are to receive the eggs from which the working bees

come. Then there are other cells, a little larger, to receive the eggs that make males—*true* males, you understand. And lastly, there are cells for those eggs that produce females. Those cells are round, large, and beautiful, because our females are to become queens."

Gigino and Big-Tongs were about to express their admiration, when suddenly there was a loud humming.

"Hush! The Queen!" murmured Honeybee.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE QUEEN AND THE EMPEROR

A BEAUTIFUL creature came slowly along, accompanied by a train of bees that followed her Majesty.

"Those," murmured Honeybee, "are the Queen's maids of honor."

As the Queen advanced, she stopped before each cell to place an egg within it. All the while the maids of honor sang songs of praise to the mother of their race. Once the Queen halted to speak to those about her.

"I trust that my people are satisfied with me," she said. "To-day I have laid two hundred eggs, each safely in its cell."

Gigino started in surprise.

"Two hundred eggs a day! And how long does this work last?"

"That depends," answered Honeybee. "Generally it continues for three months, during which time she lays fifteen thousand eggs."

"Fifteen thousand eggs! Why, you could feed the world on omelets!"

Honeybee did not understand. How could she? She had never lived among men.

The ants stared in wonder. Honeybee approached the Queen with great respect and talked with her for a moment.

"The Queen tells me that she will be happy to make your acquaintance, and begs that you be presented."

"General, I beg you!" whispered Gigino to Big-Tongs, "now is the time to announce me."

Then he stepped back a little, while Big-Tongs announced his Emperor:

> "Here is the Emperor, brave and strong,
> *Tra la tra la, tral lerurillallera!*
> Show him honor with pipe and song,
> *Tra la tra la, tral lerurillallera!*"

Gigino stepped forward gravely and bowed to the Queen.

"The Emperor of All the Ants is most happy to do honor to the sweet, wise Queen of the Bees."

"It is our duty," answered the Queen, "to express to you, in the presence of our people, our deep gratitude. You have saved our city from one of our most dreaded enemies. We offer you the freedom of our city. Furthermore, we are exceedingly pleased that this occasion should have brought together the ants and the bees, the two most noble and most intelligent races of insects."

"Surely," replied Gigino, "we have in common many instincts and habits. The ants, too, live as you do. There are females, males, and workers among us, as there are among you. I should, however, inform you that my general and myself are not workers, as we seem to be, but males."

"That is curious! I thought that the ants killed their males, as we do."

Gigino thought it best to change the subject, and, without answering the Queen's remark, went on to say:

"I have had the pleasure, Your Majesty, of visiting your city, and I am greatly surprised to find it so large and beautiful. Are your subjects very numerous?"

"About thirty thousand."

"Thirty thousand! It's a tremendous population!"

"How many ants are there in your city?"

"Oh, my dear Queen," replied Gigino, much embarrassed, "my subjects . . . why, there they are . . . !"

Gigino pointed to Big-Tongs. Big-Tongs bowed.

At this point, seeing that the Queen was altogether at a loss to understand him, Gigino thought it wise to tell the most important facts of his life, dwelling at length upon the battles he had won.

"Now, my dear Queen, I am a poor dethroned emperor. I envy your condition, a happy queen, respected and loved by all her people."

At these words the Queen leaned toward Gigino and whispered to him that she had grave doubts about the whole matter.

"You must understand," continued the Queen, "that I am the mother of this people. I secure it its life. I continue the race, and this people is mine because I bring it to light. Do you think that I would have been made a queen because of my pretty face? Not in the least. I am a queen because I have agreed to see to it that the race goes on. I shall remain a queen just as long as I am the mother of my people. The day I stop laying eggs, that day I cease to be a queen. You see, my dear Emperor, my path is not one of roses."

The noble language of the Queen Bee made a deep impression upon Gigino. He understood the way of the world a little better. It was true. To be great, you had to do great things.

"I hope," he said, "that your highness will permit me now and then to exchange a few words with you."

"With pleasure, my dear Emperor."

Gigino bowed and kissed the Queen's hand and took leave of her, while from all around them arose the shouts of the people.

"Long live the Queen!"

"Long live the Emperor!"

Then Gigino and Big-Tongs continued to follow Honeybee as she led them about the hive.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE GRAPES

THERE, within the hive our two ants lived happily. There was always plenty to eat and there were always friends to talk to. Big-Tongs said, "It is a life as sweet as honey," and Big-Tongs had learned a great deal about honey. They lived in a beautiful chamber set aside for them by the grateful bees. Here, upon a table that Gigino had made, were served to them meals worthy of any emperor.

One day Honeybee brought forth some royal jelly, a dish so exquisite and so different from the usual honey, that it made Big-Tongs very happy.

"Is it possible to get this royal jelly every day?" he asked.

"No, it is not possible," answered Honeybee. 'This jelly is sweeter and heavier than honey. It has some magic power, and therefore it is put aside for the larvæ that are to become queen bees."

"What sort of power?" asked Gigino, much interested.

"A magic power. This royal jelly has a great deal of influence upon the development of our larvæ. In the ordinary cells we place the ordinary food, but we place this in a cell where the larva of a queen bee lies. The larva then grows into a queen bee, largely because of the food that it receives."

"Therefore!"

"Therefore, if we were to feed the larva of a worker on this jelly, it would become a queen bee."

Gigino's mouth was wide open with fright.

"Tell me, I beg of you, is there any danger? I have eaten the jelly. Am I to become a queen bee?"

Honeybee made no answer.

"Please tell me. I don't know what is to become of me. It would be a crime. Speak to me, Honeybee."

She laughed at him.

"Do you think, you stupid thing, that this food could have the same effect on an ant as it has on a bee?"

At this Gigino calmed down, but, turning to Honeybee, he begged her not to bring any more royal jelly

—a request that made the ever hungry Big-Tongs exclaim in tones of disappointment:

"What a pity! Why, I'd undertake to lay eggs forever for another mouthful of that stuff."

"Shame upon you! A fine figure you would cut! Big-Tongs a queen bee! Come, let us go. I want to teach you a number of new military drills."

You must know that since Gigino found himself well cared for and without worries, he began again to dream big dreams. In the brains of that ant-made boy, arose pictures of wonderful deeds, marvelous reforms, glorious battles, easy victories.

Honeybee, who did not approve of these dreams, felt somewhat flattered by the promises Gigino made to her. Some day she might be a great lady at Gigino's court. She had, therefore, made him a beautiful crown of wax, and a splendid coat of mail of the same material. In this warlike costume, Gigino

put Big-Tongs through a number of drills every day. The Emperor reviewed Big-Tongs, the one lone member of his army, with all the pride of a great commander.

Meanwhile, the bees worked busily on, looking after their houses, caring for their children, and building up a larger city. The workers came in past the watchful sentinels and deposited the honey they had gathered in their journeys. A hundred bees a minute passed in and out of the door, and Gigino, who looked on at their doings, calculated that each bee made four journeys a day. Since the village had a population of thirty thousand, the citizens made altogether a total of one hundred and twenty thousand trips in one day. What a busy place!

The whole hive seemed to be in constant confusion. But all went on with easy regularity. Each one attended to his own business. Some brought in honey, some prepared wax, some cleaned, some carried out their dead, some kept guard, while others ventilated the hive.

Nursed with so much care, the larvæ grew rapidly. Often our hero amused himself by peeping into the different cells at the soft and limbless bodies of the little creatures.

One morning he noticed that a number of bees, who had been engaged in placing food in the cells, were now occupied in closing up some of the cells with wax.

"Stop!" cried Gigino. "You will smother them if you do that!"

"Not in the least," answered a bee. "These larvæ are already developed. They are now turning into pupæ and are spinning their cocoons. It will not be hard for the insect that comes out of the cocoon to break through the walls of its cell."

At that moment Big-Tongs came to tell Gigino that dinner was ready. They went to their chamber, where a bee had set their meal. As Gigino ate his food, he kept murmuring:

"Surely I know this dish. I have tasted it before. Where, where have I eaten it?"

Suddenly he gave a cry:

"Ah! the grapes! My home!"

And turning to the bee, he asked:

"My dear friend, where did you get this honey? It is important that I know!"

"Why!" answered the bee, "I got it from a grape-vine that grows along the front wall of a white house with green shutters."

"That's it!" cried Gigino. "It is my home! Tell me, tell me . . . is it far from here?"

"Yes, pretty far."

"Listen, my dear little bee, could you not take me on your back as far as that house?"

"To-day, it is impossible. There's much to do at home."

"To-morrow morning?"

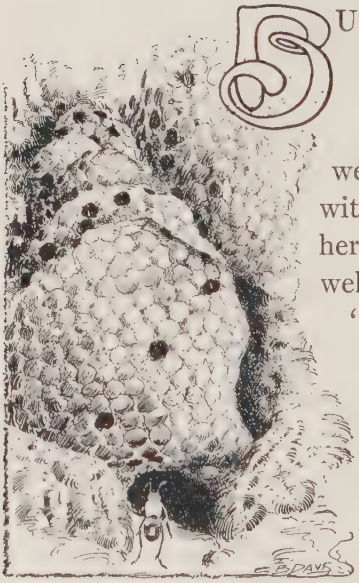
"Perhaps!"

"Then it is settled. To-morrow!" exclaimed Gigino, in great glee.

The idea of seeing his mother once more had made him forget his dreams. So it is, thoughts of home are ever strong and they often drive away our wrong ideas. Gigino wished the day might pass quickly, so that he might fly to his home and see his dear mother once again.

CHAPTER XXXVII

A REVOLUTION



BUT that day was a long one, — long and terrible.

That afternoon Gigino went to talk over his plans with the Queen, to thank her, and to bid her farewell.

"Happy Emperor!" she said. "Do you still envy my position?"

"Certainly, most powerful Queen!"

"Powerful!" replied the Queen. "Do you want to see how great my power is, and how my subjects obey me?"

Turning to a group of bees she cried, "Come, give me some honey to eat!"

To the astonishment of Gigino, the bees did not move.

"Do you see?" cried the Queen. "Do you see

how my subjects obey me? Do you know why? Because from an egg which I myself have laid, a queen bee is about to be born."

"What!" cried Gigino. "Do those royal cells contain the new queens?"

The Queen did not answer, but rushed toward the spot Gigino had indicated. Near the royal cells stood a deep line of workers. They were on the watch for the coming of the old Queen. Seeing her advance, they thrust her back.

"You cannot enter!" they cried.

Gigino was dumfounded. He could not understand. He had seen so many proofs of love on the part of the bees for their Queen. How could they rise up against her! Something strange was about to happen. There was no doubt of it. Only a few bees had left the hive that day. The whole city was full of excitement. Gigino heard one of the bees talking to her neighbors.

"There are too many of us in here! In two days five thousand new citizens have been born! We will smother unless some of us fly away," she said.

What could it all mean? Gigino searched everywhere for Honeybee to ask what was the matter, but he could not find her. He asked other bees to explain, but they did not answer. They were too excited and too much occupied to bother with him.

"Has everybody gone mad?" asked Big-Tongs, as he came up to Gigino. The noise had increased. All the bees were shouting at once, flapping their wings in great excitement. Then the old Queen, calm and bold, advanced before them.

"My people, I believe that up to the present time I have fulfilled my duty to you. The new bees among you are proof that I speak the truth."

"True! Hurrah for the Queen!" cried some of the bees.

"Thank you," she went on. "But my work here is ended. The new generation which I have created, and for which all of you have toiled, has need of room. It wants to establish a new kingdom. The cell of the new Queen is about to burst open."

"Long live the new Queen!" shouted other voices.

"Long may she live," continued the old ruler, "and may she be happy in the midst of you! You know that there cannot be two queens in one kingdom. No! Let the young queen therefore be your leader. May she be brave and true to you. As for me, I have not yet finished my work. Other cities have need of my life, and I depart. I go to found a new kingdom. All those that love me, follow me."

After pronouncing these words, the old Queen moved toward the opening. Then there arose a ter-

rible confusion, and an immense number of bees followed the old Queen and took to wing. A voice in the midst of the thick cloud of flying bees shouted:

"Farewell, Emperor!"

And Gigino, who had run to the door, saw Honeybee fly away with the old Queen. The two ants returned to the city much depressed. The bees that had remained behind were marching toward the royal cells, around which there still stood the line of bees who had been the first to throw off the yoke of the old Queen. A cry echoed through the hive:

"She has come!"

A new bee had broken the cell that held her prisoner. She came out, looked about her, and, noticing the other royal cells, began to buzz in discontent. Then, with a sudden movement, she fell upon the cell nearest her, and with drawn needle was about to break it open, crying, "There are still others! . . . There are still others! . . ."

But the guards restrained her in time, and she was dragged away, held by the wings and by the legs in such a way that she could not renew her attack. The bee struggled violently, but in vain. Finally she became quiet, and, crossing her wings over her body, she said:

"I am very happy to have seen the light. I thank you for the tender care you have shown me. The old Queen has set the example. She has gone away to found a new colony. That is as it should be. For it is not good that all of us remain here in this crowded village. I, too, shall go away. My work is about to begin, and I can do no better than found a new home. Let some other young queen be your ruler. May she be as brave and as good as our queen mother has been. It is enough. All that love me, follow me."

The young bees bowed their heads in an attitude of love and respect. The mother of the new race had spoken, and the people bent their heads in obedience.

"Yes!" she exclaimed. "Now I know my work. Follow me! I am going to fulfill it."

She flew out of the hive. The same thing happened as had already taken place in the case of the old Queen. Thousands of bees collected in a buzzing crowd and followed her. A joyous cry filled the air.

"Long live the Queen!"

Gigino, who had witnessed this second swarming, again heard a voice cry out:

"Farewell, Emperor!"

It was the bee that had brought him honey from the grapevine.

"I understand," murmured Gigino, in deep sorrow. "The thing is settled. I shall not see my home for a long time to come!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII

A FIGHT

GIGINO had heard his folks at home speak of the swarming of bees; but it was only now that he understood the real reason that forced a swarm of bees to leave its hive. As the population became larger, the hive grew too small to allow all the bees to dwell in comfort. Under such conditions, good order was impossible. Everything was in confusion, and the whole kingdom was threatened with destruction. What was to be done? There was only one answer to this question: the population must be decreased. Some must leave the hive in order that those left behind might continue to live. The old Queen, the wise mother of her race, was the first to see the need of action, the first to prove her love for her people, the

first to move, the first to detach herself from the home that was dear to her. She exiled herself from her native city, so that the life of the race might be assured. She went off with her followers to found a new colony, to build a new nation.

Gigino thought that the bees were just like the human race, who are compelled by need of air and of food to leave their first homes in search of better lands. In this way man had spread over the face of the earth, scattering everything before him as he went. But the story of man's movements was one of conquest and misery. How much wiser and happier were the bees! But Gigino's reflections were cut short by a deafening cry from the bees that surrounded the royal cells.

"Two of them! Two queens at once!"

"A fight! A fight!"

Just then out jumped two queen bees from their cells. They looked hard at each other and were ready to battle at a moment's notice. There were two queens! One too many! Who should die? This time the crowd of bees did not try to calm their fighting temper, but formed a circle around the two rivals, and awaited the outcome to decide which of the two should rule.

The two queen bees were not long in rushing at each other with great fury. They rolled around, locked in each other's arms.

Should both strike at once with their powerful stings, they would both die. If they killed each other, the city would be left without a mother. That would be a terrible misfortune. The next moment they separated and flew about the hive as if seeking to fly away. But the crowd about them began to shout and to drive them on. The two queen bees must fight. Again they rushed at each other. At last one of the queen bees, seeing her chance, hurled herself upon the other and succeeded in getting hold of her rival's wings. At the same time she drove her needle into her rival's body, and the deed was done. One of the two queens lay dead before them.

There was a great shout for the victorious Queen.

"Long live the Queen! Long live the Queen!"

The two ants had seen the bloody fight, and Gigino could not help expressing his disgust.

"This is savage!" he said. "I cannot see how a question of jealousy can cause two bees of the same family to try to kill each other."

Gigino could not understand the matter, and the sight made him uneasy. He began to feel out of place in that city. The old Queen was gone; Honeybee was gone; all his old friends were gone! Now the population had changed. What was to become of him? He could almost hear them ask: "Who are you? What are you doing here? What right have

you to live in a city that is not your own and to take part in the life of a people to whom you do not belong?"

And then he thought, "Suppose they should take me for an enemy, might they not kill me?"

"Big-Tongs," said he, "let us prepare to depart."

"What!"

"We'll have to leave, if we do not want the new citizens to kill us and then to bury us in wax."

"What a pity!" exclaimed Big-Tongs. "We were so well-off here. Who is going to give us honey from now on?"

But Gigino walked on, saying, "Hurry, let us go."

Big-Tongs followed him with a sad heart. When they came to the entrance of the hive, they stopped for an instant to take a last look at the great and beautiful city that had given them so much love, so much quiet, and so much comfort. As they looked, they saw the new Queen Bee and her subjects approaching. The two ants stepped aside to let them pass.

The Queen made a short flight outside of the hive and returned to the entrance. Then she made a second flight, longer than the first, and came back to the hive. She flew a third time farther than before. Upon her return this time, she exclaimed:

"Now I am sure of finding my way home. Farewell!"

"Hurrah for the Queen! Hurrah for the Queen!" the crowd shouted.

They were, in fact, celebrating the wedding of the young Queen. High in the air, amid the fragrance of sweet flowers, the male bees awaited the Queen. She was to go to them and select one from their number. Then she would return to the city and do her people's will. Gigino made a sign to Big-Tongs.

"Right about face — March!"

The two friends began to descend the trunk of the friendly old oak.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE RIDE ON A COAT COLLAR

WHEN the two ants reached the foot of the tree, the sun was high in the sky. The whole country was bathed in its warm rays. Gigino gazed upward to take a last look at the hive, and, as he did so, — lo! there fell around him a golden rain of winged insects.

"Help! Help! we are dying!" they said.

"I understand!" said Gigino. "These are the males! The drones! Big-Tongs, the males have been killed and then

thrown headlong out of the city, where no one is to stay who is not able to work!"

Of course, it must be remembered that this action, cruel though it may appear, was necessary; for these males are simply do-nothings, hangers-on, and the workers are too wise to allow them to live in idleness in a place where life means work.

The two ants were not made happy by what they had seen. They took their way with bowed heads and sad hearts. They were without a home and without hope, and they walked on toward the dark unknown. Gigino's last chance to return to his mother had gone, and he was now condemned to live the life of a wandering insect. Never more in this life would he see his dreams come to pass. Even Big-Tongs was sad, for he saw that an end had come to the three daily meals of honey. From now on he had to struggle against a strong appetite, which is a bitter and powerful enemy.

They had been walking some time when they came to a large tree, in which they heard a shrill buzzing. Our hero looked up. From a low branch there hung a tangled mass of bees, all hanging together and talking in great excitement. At once Gigino knew his old friends. He was about to shout, for he had recognized in the midst of that din the voice of his old friend Honeybee, but Big-Tongs cried out:

"Be careful! There's the foot of a large beast."

In truth it was the foot of a man. Gigino had barely time enough to avoid being crushed to death. He saw a man, his face covered with a thick netting, carrying a bell-like basket made of straw and twigs. He was walking carefully toward the branch where the bees hung. Gigino just had time to shout:

"Beware, Honeybee, he is going to catch you!"

It was too late, the man had already shaken the bees into his basket, and covered it up. Then Gigino had a brilliant idea.

"Hurry!" he said to Big-Tongs; "follow me."

Up, up, over the man's shoe he climbed.

"Are you here, Big-Tongs?" asked Gigino, when he had reached the top of the shoe.

"I am," came the answer; "but what is your purpose?"

"My dear friend, first of all it will save us the trouble of walking. Secondly, it will take us comfortably to the spot where the new city of the bees will be."

"And where is that?"

"I suppose it is in a hive made by man for the purpose of keeping bees and getting their honey."

"Thieves!" cried Big-Tongs, looking at the matter from the point of view of an insect. "They ought to be ashamed — big, powerful things that they are, to be living on the labors of such tiny beings as we."

Gigino made no answer. He saw that a journey on top of a shoe was not to be so comfortable as he had imagined. Each time the foot moved, the ants were shaken up. They had to put forth great efforts to keep from falling.

"We'll have to find a better place," he said. "This mode of travel may be good enough for some folks, but I must have something better."

And followed by Big-Tongs, he clambered up over the man's trousers and then up on to his coat. They stopped when they were settled on his coat collar.

"This, at least, is comfortable," Gigino said.

CHAPTER XL

AN OLD FRIEND

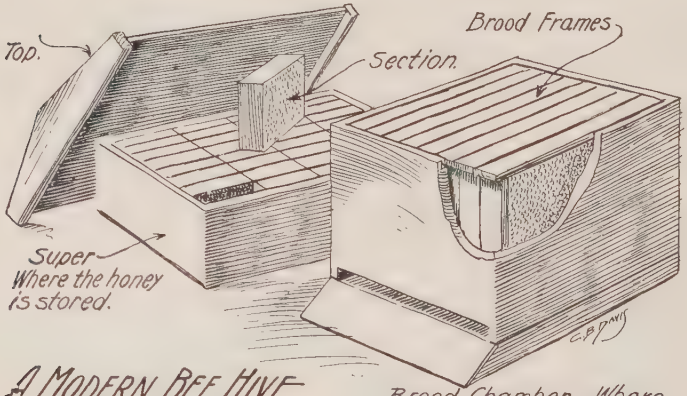
THE two ants had been traveling a long time when the man stopped in a large open place, surrounded on all sides by trees. Gigino saw that between each pair of trees there was a beehive. Now he knew that he was on the grounds of a rich beekeeper, a great friend of his father, a man who lived about a mile or so from them. This was a short distance for him as a boy, but an enormous distance for him now that he was an ant.

The man bent down, lifted his arm, and with a rapid motion put the basket upside down upon a box filled with frames and called a hive. Then, with an instrument called a "smoker," he surrounded the basket with smoke.

"Do you see?" asked Gigino of Big-Tongs, who was sneezing as hard as ever he could. "He does this to loosen the bees that are stuck together. Come, now is the time to get down."

And off they started.

Meantime the man finished his work, took the netting off his face, and started to make the rounds of



A MODERN BEE HIVE

Brood Chamber—Where the bees are raised and live.

the other hives. Suddenly, as he looked into one, he cried:

"The Queen Bee is flying off!"

Immediately an army of maddened bees flew out upon him, shouting, buzzing, stinging. The man ran wildly, followed closely by the angry bees that stung him on all sides. On and on he ran, the bees close upon him. After a long while the bees left him,

and the man sank down exhausted upon the ground.

It had all happened so suddenly that the two ants, who were in the act of descending from the man's collar, would surely have fallen to the ground, had they not by a stroke of good luck dropped into his pocket. But this accident was not so good as it promised, for Gigino and Big-Tongs found themselves in a heap of tobacco. To escape this, they took refuge in the bowl of a pipe. But this was even worse than the tobacco itself.

"Come, hurry. Let's get out of here, or we will choke to death!" cried Gigino.

The two ants, having succeeded in getting to the open air, hurried away as fast as they could.

"May I know what it all means?" asked Big-Tongs.

"It means," said Gigino, "that in opening a hive, the man allowed the Queen Bee to escape. She alighted on him and, naturally, all the others followed her, and did not leave the man until the Queen did."

The poor Emperor hastened on. He had an idea that thus he might drive away the sadness from his heart. He was in a dreadful state. Even the hope of finding his bee-friends was lost. Perhaps they were not far away, but what could two poor ants do? They did not know where to spend the night.

What was the good of being an emperor or a general, if you had no roof over your head and no food for your stomach?

The two travelers had been walking for some time, when Big-Tongs, looking at Gigino, exclaimed:

"Where is your crown, Your Majesty?"

Gigino put a leg to his head. The crown, his beautiful crown, was gone. Alas! It had been left in the man's pocket with the tobacco. Thus it happens that, in a single moment, the greatest honors of this earth may be reduced to nothing!

It was the last blow for our hero. He stopped and threw himself to the ground.

"Ah, do you not think, my dear general," he cried, "that it is useless to go farther? Where shall we go? What is the good of going at all? We might just as well wait here for death as go searching for it. O mamma, my dear, dear mamma!"

Gigino knew that the thought of his mother always brought him good luck, and he raised his head. Sure enough! A large insect was flying toward him, an insect that reminded him of his home and his family.

"Horn Tail! Cephus!" cried Gigino.

"Ah! Then it is you yourself!" exclaimed Horn Tail, the insect that had opened a passage through the iron lock of Gigino's home.

"Yes, it is I. Oh, if you only knew, my dear friend, how happy I am to see you!"

"And I!" said the insect, placing himself beside the two ants. "I shall never forget the service you rendered me by saving me from being crushed to death by that woman. But what are you doing here?"

"Misfortune has brought me to a sad pass. I have not even shelter for the night."

"My poor friend!"

Cephus stood for a while in thought.

"Wait a moment," he said after a short silence, "perhaps I may be able to help. I know of a lodging where, if the signs do not deceive me, you'll be able to rest in comfort. Do you see the oak tree beyond the hill?"

"Yes."

"Well, but a moment since, when I was on its trunk, I heard a little sound coming from the inside, as if some one were scraping the wood. You know that I have some acquaintance with such things. If I'm not mistaken, the sound comes from some insect that has just undergone its last change and is trying to get out. Do you want to go and see?"

"By all means!"

They set out toward the oak, and on the way Gigino introduced Big-Tongs to Horn Tail.

"My dear general, do you know that our friend Cephus bores holes even through iron? I myself saw him do it!"

But Big-Tongs was not so surprised as Gigino expected him to be.

"I believe it," he said simply.

When they arrived at the oak, Horn Tail climbed up, followed by the two ants. At a certain point he halted.

"Do you hear?" he said.

One could, indeed, hear a noise inside the trunk.

"We shall have to wait," added Cephus, "but it will not be for long. Our friend on the inside is working with all his might."

In fact, shortly after, directly in front of Gigino, a hole opened in the trunk and a tiny head appeared. It looked out and buzzed in its soft, sweet voice:

"At last I breathe the blessed air!"

Two little legs came out of the hole and then an insect with violet wings.

"A bee!" cried Gigino, and he would have liked to ask her a whole string of questions, but the insect, extending her wings to the sun, straightened out her legs, shook her head, and, making a graceful bow, flew away, exclaiming:

"How beautiful is life!"

"She is right," said Cephus, going up to Gigino, who, at that sudden flight, was a little sad. "Believe me, friend, it is wonderful for a being who has been shut up in the dark, working all the time with only one aim in view, finally to become an insect, and to get out into the air and to be able to say, 'At last! Now I am free!' It is a moment too important to stop to answer questions. I know from experience."

But Gigino felt hurt. Big-Tongs had received the information of the wonderful boring powers of Horn Tail with indifference. This must not pass by without notice.

"Do you understand?" said Gigino. "My friend here, to get out of a hole where he was shut up, gnawed right through a sheet of iron."

"I understood you before," answered Big-Tongs, in the worst of tempers. "Do you think I am deaf? As a matter of fact, deeds depend upon circumstances."

"How do you make that out?"

"Very easily. For instance, at this present moment, I myself would not only bore through iron, but eat it as well!"

Gigino stared at him and was about to give him some plain talk, when another little head, exactly like the first one, came out of the hole.

"At last, O blessed light!" she said, and, spread-

ing her wings, away she flew through the air without giving Gigino enough time to draw his breath.

Gigino lost all patience.

"Can't we go in now?" he asked.

He approached the little hole. But he stopped short, for he heard the noise of some one that was working within, and in a moment another little head appeared.

"At last!" she sang.

"At last I want to know something," shouted Gigino, catching hold of her. "It's about time to be done with these 'at lasts.' Who are you? Where do you come from? Where are you going and what are you going to do there? I warn you now, that, if you don't answer me, you'll go nowhere and do nothing at all."

CHAPTER XLI

WHERE BIG-TONGS ALMOST STARVES

CARPENTER-BEE'S NEST

SO frightened was the poor bee that she could not say a word. Gigino repented:

"Speak out, I was only joking," he said. "I will not harm you."

"Thanks!" answered the bee. "It would have been a terrible thing to meet with death just as I am beginning to live!"

"Don't be afraid. I am a great friend of the bees . . . you are a bee, are you not?"

"Yes, I am a carpenter-bee."

"Carpenter? Well, well! Why, at first glance, I took you for a miner!"

Gigino thought this a good joke. He was astonished, therefore, when Cephus answered:

"Nothing of the kind. The miner-bees make their nests in the ground."

"What! Are there such bees?"

"Certainly, just as there are mason-bees and wool-weavers."

MINER-BEE'S NEST

Meantime the bee showed signs of impatience, and Gigino, noticing this, hastened to say:

"You are right. You are in a hurry, and we are saying silly things Tell me, then, is this your house?"

"It has been my house up to the present," answered the bee. "But from now on I have a more beautiful one."

"This house, then, remains empty and I may live in it, rent-free?" asked Gigino.

"Certainly. But there are still two sisters of mine inside that have to come out. They are already at work trying to open a way. Do you hear them?"

In fact, there was the familiar sound.

"Our mother," went on the bee, "made our house, just as I shall have to make one for my children. Therefore I can tell you how it is done. We dig a hole in the trunk of a tree and at the bottom of it place a good portion of paste that we make out of honey and pollen."

"I should like to see how you make this paste," exclaimed Big-Tongs.

"I shall make it when the times comes," continued the bee. "In the middle of this paste we put an egg and then close up the whole affair with a partition of sawdust and glue. On top of this we place some more paste and then another egg, and close up the room again. We keep on in this way until we have filled the hole. Then we close it up in the same way."

MASON-BEE'S NEST

"And then?" asked Gigino.

"Then the larvæ are born and find the paste ready at hand."

"What happy creatures!" murmured Big-Tongs.

"And the larvæ grow and are changed into pupæ, and when the spring comes, they become insects like myself, and . . ."

"Yes, and . . .?"

But at this moment they heard a voice from the inside of the trunk crying:

"Dear sister! What are you doing? Do you want to keep me shut up in this dark cell forever?"

The bee interrupted her story and away she flew. Immediately after, another little head appeared, saying, "At last, the blessed light!" Then the youngest came out, and as she flew up into the clear air, she sang, "At last, the blessed light!"

"Now," said Gigino, "let us take possession of the house."

He entered, followed by Big-Tongs, while Horn Tail stayed where he was.

"I'm too big to get in there. I will wait for you outside," he said.

The house of the carpenter-bees was not, indeed, a home fit for an emperor, but it was a large house, divided into large, clean rooms.

"Clever insects!" said Gigino. "As clever as we ants, and that is saying a great deal. Because we must not forget that there are even carpenter-ants that make their homes in the trunks of trees, my dear Big-Tongs."

But Big-Tongs was busy searching for something.

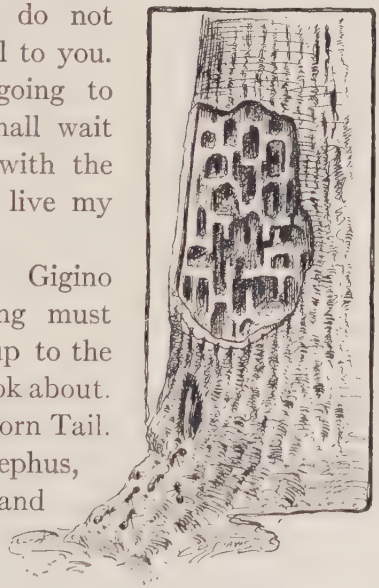
"Goodness!" he murmured. "They have eaten it all up!"

"What are you looking for?" asked Gigino.

"Nothing. I was looking around to see whether they had left a bit of that paste and honey. Not a particle! They have eaten it all up, without for a moment thinking that their house might some day be occupied by a hungry emperor and his starving general."

Seeing that Gigino was about to give him a severe scolding, Big-Tongs crouched up in a corner.

"It's useless to scold me," he said. "When I'm hungry, I lose my head. At this moment my hunger is very great, and I do not want to be disrespectful to you. Therefore I am not going to move from here. I shall wait for death and meet it with the cry on my lips, 'Long live my Emperor!'"



CARPENTER-ANT'S NEST

This was too much. Gigino was moved. Something must be done. He hurried up to the opening and began to look about. But first he spoke to Horn Tail.

"My dear friend Cephus, the house is beautiful, and I cannot thank you too much for having pointed it out to me."

"Say no more about it," answered Cephus. "It is I who am under obligations to you. If you are in need of anything else, say so."

"Thank you," answered Gigino. "I hope to see you often and enjoy your company."

Shaking his friend's front leg, he commenced to descend the trunk of the oak, while Horn Tail took

to flight. Having reached the ground, our hero began to search for something to eat. Since no one in this world ever searches without finding, so at a short distance he found a fine juicy plum. Gigino, being a tender-hearted ant, cut off a good part of the plum, made it into a little ball, put it on his back, and, retracing his steps, carried it to Big-Tongs.

"Courage!" cried Gigino, as he put down his load. "We shall not starve to-day."

Big-Tongs made a jump, fell on the little ball, and began to eat it with such eagerness that he had no time even for thanks. Then Gigino went out again, and, going to the place where he had left the plum, began to eat of it himself.

"I am badly in need of it," he said.

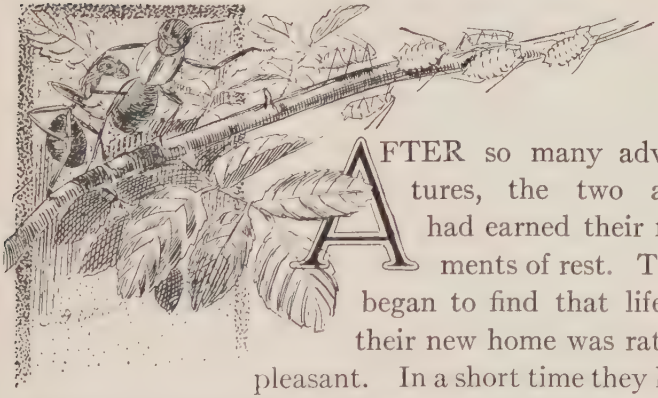
Having finished dining, he was about to make another ball to take to his friend, when he saw Big-Tongs coming toward him.

"Wait a moment," said Big-Tongs. "Let me have another bite, and then I'll carry some, too."

By the end of the day the rooms were full of food. Now there was no danger of starving,—at least, for some time to come.

CHAPTER XLII

EVEN GEOMETRY IS KNOWN TO INSECTS



AFTER so many adventures, the two ants had earned their moments of rest. They began to find that life in their new home was rather pleasant. In a short time they had explored the neighboring plants and had discovered on the stem of a rosebush six magnificent plant lice. These consented to live with the two ants and allow themselves to be fed and milked.

"With these six cows," said Gigino, "there is no danger of starving to death."

In his walks Gigino had made the acquaintance of a number of bees who happened to be in those parts, and concerning whom Horn Tail had spoken to

Gigino, for he came very often to visit our hero. Gigino had also become friendly with a few miner-bees, and very able diggers they were. He came upon some wool-weaving bees, who took the woolen goods that they wove into their nests from plants that grew about Gigino's home. He became intimate with a group of carpet-laying bees, who dug their nests in the roadways along the ground, covering them up with the petals of flowers.

Gigino took advantage of these friendships to transform his own modest house into a more comfortable place. His newly made friends decorated the wall of one room with rose leaves in such a way that, when the leaves dried, the room was covered with a soft, pink wall paper. A carpet-laying bee decorated the Emperor's room with the petals of the most fragrant flowers. His wool-weaving friends made him a fine soft mattress. Having brought the work of furnishing his home to an end, Gigino, assisted by Big-Tongs, succeeded in dragging up the trunk of the oak a very hard melon seed, which he fitted into the entrance.

The seed was placed in such a way that it turned like a revolving door. When open, it divided the entrance into two parts. In this way Gigino had an entrance for himself, and an entrance for the use of the servants and for Big-Tongs. And when his friend the mason-bee had put a clay shed over the

doorway, the huge raindrops could no longer beat in. This door and shed were much admired by the Emperor's friends and by Horn Tail, who, in the fullness of his admiration, had said:

"You are a genius!"

"I know it," whispered Gigino, taking his friend by the arm. And since those words had awakened a world of dreams that had long been asleep, he began to tell his friend all he had done in the ant city and to set forth his ideas regarding a new order among the bees. Cephus was convinced by the fine speech of Gigino, and answered by saying:

"With a head like yours, you will certainly succeed!"

"From this day forth," went on Gigino, "you are a captain!"

That day, and each day following, the Emperor, the Captain, and the General did nothing but build castles in the air.

Shall I say it? And will you believe it? Since Gigino had met his old friend Cephus, he had often thought of asking about his home. But he had never done so. Thinking it all over, he had reached the conclusion that the time had not yet come for him to return home. He bore it all with patience, living on in the hope that some day or other he would regain his old shape and be a boy again.

One beautiful morning, as he was thinking this over for the hundredth time, he saw from his seat on the melon-seed door, a bright thread of silver coming down from one of the branches of the oak. At the end of the thread was a beautiful slender caterpillar, who came down slowly along the thread that was spun out of her mouth. Gigino sat there admiring the caterpillar's skill, and then the temptation came upon him to cut the thread and watch the caterpillar go tumbling down to the ground. He stretched out his powerful jaws. Then suddenly he stopped, remembering that one day he had annoyed an old working woman by cutting the threads of her knitting. He had enjoyed the fun so much that he had gone and told his mother. But, strange to say, his mother had not been pleased. She had taken him on her knees and had begun to scold him in her sweet voice and to caress him with her soft hand and to look at him with her large eyes so full of love and sadness. She had told him how splendid it was to be good.

Her words had gone straight to his heart and he had begun to weep. He had felt sorry for what he had done.

"To annoy people who do no one harm is always wrong," his mother had told him, "but to hurt people who are at work, and to amuse one's self by spoiling their labor, is a sin. You, my Gigino, have a good heart, and now that you understand the wrong that you have done, be careful not to do it again. Always remember to respect those who work!"

And Gigino had remembered those words in time. He sat there thinking of his mother, as he looked at the caterpillar that was trying to reach the ground. He felt a great sympathy for the little animal that had awakened so many sweet and dear memories.

Suddenly the caterpillar stopped. It looked up into the air, glanced at the oak leaf to which the thread was attached, and began to climb up. As the caterpillar passed before Gigino, he could not help asking;

"What are you doing?"

"An enemy threatens my home."

"Who are you?"

"I'm a geometra!"

"A geometra!" exclaimed Gigino. "This is the best yet. I became an insect in order to save myself from going to school, and here, among insects, I run right into geometry—which is a first cousin to arithmetic, I believe."

CHAPTER XLIII

STUPID

THE Emperor saw the caterpillar a number of times after that. It made him very happy, because, somehow, every time he saw the caterpillar he thought of his mother. This was a good sign. The thought of his mother had always brought him good luck. Perhaps, even now, there might be good fortune awaiting him.

Meanwhile he could not complain of the life he was leading. He had plenty of time to sit and dream and to plan for the future. Cephus paid him a daily visit. The carpet-layers, the miners, and the wool-weavers, upon whom Gigino had great influence, came to listen to his words. All told, Gigino was leading a happy, quiet life.

One day Cephus came to him much disturbed. He said that a man had been seen walking about the place, examining the insects with much interest.

Gigino was curious to see the man, and did not allow much time to pass before he did so.

The next morning, while he was standing outside the door of his house, he saw a little man with a large book under his arm. He carried in his hand a long pole, at one end of which was a net. He was out hunting butterflies. Gigino knew that this man was a naturalist, an entomologist. At least, from the little he had picked up at school, he knew that entomology meant the study of insects.

At that moment down from the oak slowly came the caterpillar on its thread of silver. It went down to the ground and stretched itself at the feet of the hunter. The man at once bent over it. Then, seating himself at the foot of the oak tree, he opened his book, took a pencil out of his pocket, and, keeping an eye on the caterpillar, began to draw a picture of it. On its part, the caterpillar lifted its little head just as if it knew the man's intention, and stood there with its body bent for all the world in the shape of an S.

Gigino saw the man make a drawing of this shape of the caterpillar, and understood that it was the man's aim to draw the insect in different positions. The caterpillar, too, seemed to understand it, for a little while afterward it stretched itself and bent its body in the shape of a T. The naturalist drew this form, also. Then the caterpillar twisted itself

into a U. This, too, was drawn. Again the caterpillar changed, and the man drew the next form, P. As if tired, the caterpillar stretched out its full length. This reproduced I. Finally the insect curled up once more, and the naturalist copied D.

At this point Gigino burst into a long, loud laugh, and even Big-Tongs came out of the house to see what was the matter.

He had good reason to laugh. There in the book, the six letters, all in a row, made an old familiar word — STUPID.

"Well done!" cried Gigino. "That is what should happen to every one who concerns himself only with outside appearances, instead of studying our life, our pains, and our pleasures. Instead of measuring our intelligence, they measure our bodies!"

Meanwhile the man, having shut his book, went off contented with the drawings he had made.

"That caterpillar," said Gigino to himself, "must be an insect of talent!"

No sooner had he said these words than he began to tremble.

"How in the world did that caterpillar manage to form that word? That insect understands the value of words! It can read and write! Then . . . it . . . is . . . *an insect like myself!* It was once human!"

The idea was too much for Gigino. His head spun

around. He lost his balance and slipped off his seat to the ground right in front of the caterpillar. He was not hurt by the fall, but he was quite overcome. To add to his confusion, the caterpillar cried out:

"Gigino!"

"What!" stammered Gigino, trembling. "You know my name as a boy? How do you know it?"

"That's simple. I know you by the White Patch on your back!"

"But who are you, then? Tell me!"

"I am . . . Georgina!"

"Georgina! Ah, my dear Georgina!" cried Gigino, overcome with joy. If he fainted, you must not be surprised. Any one of you would have done the same thing.

When he came to, he found himself between Georgina and Big-Tongs, who had run down immediately after his fall to find out what had happened. Gigino, pointing to the caterpillar, exclaimed:

"My sister!"

"What!" exclaimed Big-Tongs. "Your sister?"

"I am her brother."

Big-Tongs was dumb with amazement, and, without further delay, he ran up the trunk of the tree, crying:

"A caterpillar that is the sister of an ant that is her brother! Goodness! The Emperor has gone mad!"

Meanwhile Gigino had embraced Georgina, and you who have sisters and brothers can easily imagine how happy they were in each other's company.

Georgina wanted to know all Gigino's story.

"You, dear Gigino, became an ant to save yourself from studying Latin grammar. Now you are a worker. To escape arithmetic, I wished to become a butterfly, and now, instead of arithmetic, I've got geometry! It's terrible! It's all our fault!"

"What has become of Maurice?" said Gigino.

At that moment there hopped before them Gigino's old acquaintance, the grasshopper. Was it possible! Indeed, it did seem as though a dream were to come true! In wonder they looked at the sad face of the grasshopper, who had grown old and worn through much study and worry. On his part, the grasshopper, as soon as he caught sight of our two friends, leaped into the air and sang in great excitement:

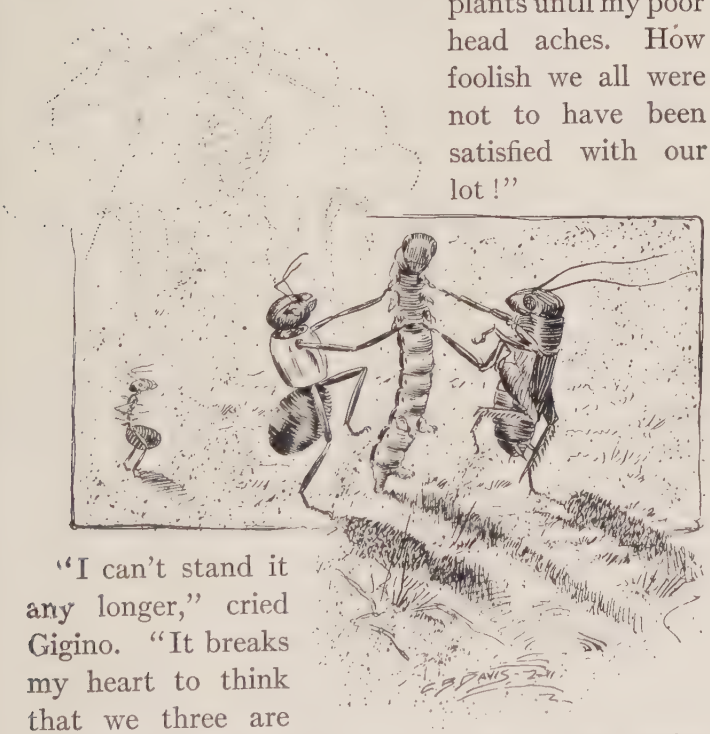
Kse-nick, Kse-nick,
Ker tick — her tick,
What's this — What's this!
Brzwi — Bzwi — Gigino!
Tchw — Tchw — Georgina!

"I have found you both. At last we three are again together."

"Maurice!" shouted the two, in one voice.

"Yes, Maurice, the boy that became a grasshopper.

And all to get away from school and history! If you only knew how I have had to suffer! History! Why, I have had to study the history of animals and plants until my poor head aches. How foolish we all were not to have been satisfied with our lot!"



"I can't stand it any longer," cried Gigino. "It breaks my heart to think that we three are reduced to this state. Oh! to be a boy again! Hurrah for Latin grammar!"

"Hurrah for arithmetic!" echoed Georgina.

"Long live the history of the Middle Ages!" exclaimed Maurice.

At this point a familiar voice cried out behind them:

"Indeed?"

The three insects turned around with wide, staring eyes. There was the man with the big spectacles and long green coat. He looked at them as he had looked once before so very long ago, but his smile seemed to be kinder and his voice softer

"So be it," he said. Then he disappeared.

The insects jumped into the air and stretched themselves to their full height. Behold, there beside a small stone bench stood three happy children!

How they laugh! You can hear their merry voices as they run down the path toward the house. They break open the door, calling as they enter, "Mother! Mother!"

It is a beautiful afternoon. The sun is soft and cool. The crickets and the birds are singing merrily. The flowers smile as if they, too, enjoyed the summer day.

Big-Tongs laughs and the bees hum, while through the open window of the big white country house, Gigino is heard saying:

"Yes, Mother, I was made Emperor of All the Ants."

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